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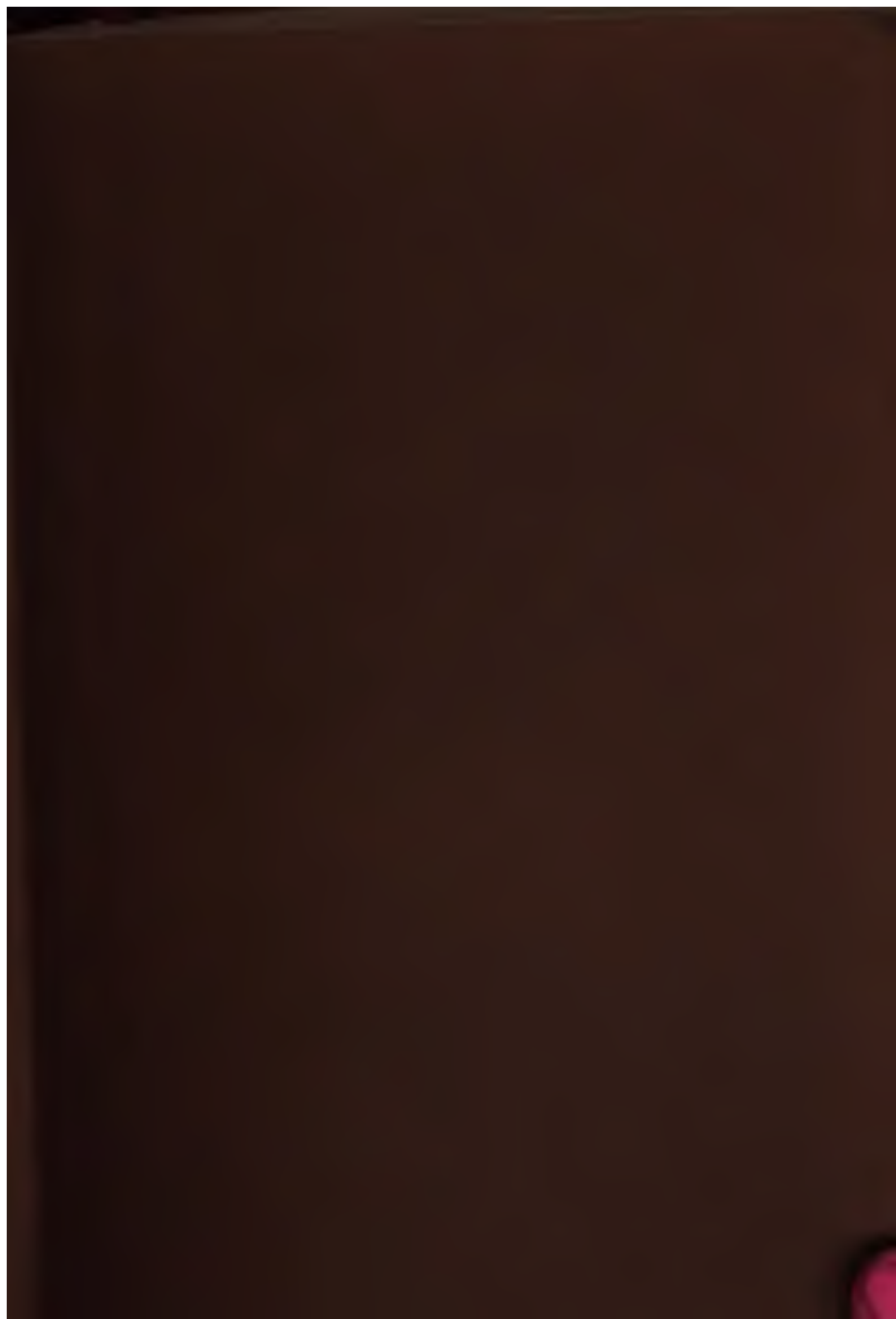
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**THE OUTBREAK**  
**OF THE**  
**GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION**

**RELATED BY**  
**A PEASANT OF LORRAINE.**

**By MM. ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN.**

**TRANSLATED BY**  
**MRS. CASHEL HOEY.**

**IN THREE VOLUMES.**  
**VOL. III.**



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THE  
OUTBREAK  
OF THE  
GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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THE COUNTRY IS IN DANGER.

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CHAPTER I.

THIS letter from Marguerite did the greatest good in the country. I read it aloud myself at least a hundred times, for not only did all the people of Baraques want to hear it, but all the carriers, all the strangers of every sort who stopped at the "Three Pigeons," invariably said, after they had bidden us good day, and ordered their wine—

"They say you have had news from Paris,



Maitre Jean. We should like very much to know what is going on there."

And then Maitre Jean would say to me—  
"Michel, go and bring the letter."

I would take the letter out of the press, and read it from beginning to end in the middle of an eager circle, who listened, with their packs on their shoulders, or their whips in their hands. They were astonished, and asked many questions. Maitre Jean dilated upon the markets, the clubs, and even the theatres, which he had never seen, but which his good sense enabled him to realise.

Finally, after having been thoroughly enlightened, each man would return to his own affairs, saying—

"We shall see! Provided the patriots stand firm in Paris, and keep the upper hand, all will be well."

The people had great need of being encouraged just then. The nobles, the former justiciaries, and the bishops, who could no longer maintain their injustice at the National Assembly, because the deputies of the third estate had proved clearly to them that they

had been wrong in desiring to live at the expense of the nation, began to think of recovering the mastery over us by force. But they did not want to fight themselves—that was too dangerous; they wanted to make us fight among ourselves, against each other, and, if that did not suffice, to call the Germans to their assistance. The nobles had just struck the first blow at Nancy, by opposing the National Guards to the troops, now the bishops meditated striking a second, by opposing the religious people, who cared about eternal life, to the patriots, who cared about the good things of this world. After having regained these good things, the religious people were to restore them to the bishops, and rest content with their benediction.

This was really the bottom of the matter, as you will presently see. About the end of November, 1790, just before the snow, we were surprised by the re-appearance of a number of persons believed to have emigrated—the priest Gaspard of Phalsbourg, Roos, the schoolmaster, and others who were

said to be at Trêves for the last six months. At the same time the curés, nominated by the nobles and bishops, were going and coming on all the roads, and holding meetings at Neuville, Hemidorff, Saverne, &c., &c. What was the meaning of all this? Something was going on, we did not know what, but the patriots, especially those who had bought Church property, were very uneasy, for they said—

“These people are returning from the emigration—it is dangerous.”

And then, we learned from the newspapers that, after great strife among the National Assembly, our deputies had decreed that the priests must take the oath to the constitution.

Things had happened thus :

The bishops, who did not dare to protest against the sale of the ecclesiastical property, because it would then have been made too plain that they cared for nothing but the wealth of this world, had changed their line of action, and now demanded that the National Assembly should recognize the Catholic,

Apostolic, and Roman religion, as the religion of France. This amounted to saying that we had two kings—one to rule our bodies, in Paris, the other to rule our souls, in Rome. But the Assembly had refused, replying that souls had no king but God, who sees all and knows all, and has no need of any one to govern in his stead.

Then, these insolent men had been guilty of so much violence and impertinence, that in order to bring them to reason, our deputies decreed that for the future the bishops and curés should be nominated by the people, as in the time of the Apostles. Naturally, the bishops were excessively angry. The Cardinal de Rohan, the Archbishop of Trêves, and many other dignitaries of the Church, had protested against the decree, and continued to nominate their curés. And then Gaspard of Phalsbourg, Barnabé of Haguenau, Janvier of Molsheim, Tibere of Schlestadt, Roos, Holzer of Audelau, Meuret, the rector of Renfeld, in short, scores of monks, came back from Trêves, Coblentz, and Constance, and the little books began to appear again

in such numbers, that one would have thought the *Apocalypse*, the *Lantern Magique Nationale*, the *Passions de Louis XVI.*, the *Reflexions de Monsieur Burke sur la Revolution Française*, were falling from the trees like dead leaves in autumn.

All these wicked little books said that we ought to refuse to pay the taxes, that we were governed by Jews and Protestants, that it was better to obey a king with limited powers than twelve hundred brigands, that the rights of man were a mere farce, that the assignats would be worth two farthings and no more; in short, everything that it was possible to invent to frighten and depress the country.

Meantime the massacres were beginning again in the South, so that the National Assembly, seeing that France was disturbed throughout, and in danger of complete overthrow, if they did not take new measures, had decreed that the bishops and curés should swear fidelity to the constitution, thinking to force them thus to fulfil their duties, instead of kindling civil war among us. But

then, if you had seen the conduct of the women, you would have learned how ignorant the people in our villages were. I think I still see Brother Benedict, when he arrived one morning at our door, with his ass, groaning as if all were lost, and crying—

“Yes, now it is plain into what an abyss we have fallen! They have robbed us of everything, they have taken our goods from us, the goods of the poor, which have been placed for ages in the hands of Holy Church. We have borne with everything, we have not protested; we have simply made the sign of the Blessed Cross, but now—now they want to destroy our souls!”

And he repeated, with sobs—

“To destroy our souls!”

Dame Catherine, Létumier's wife, and all the neighbours, ran to console him, lifting up their hands and groaning.

That same day, Janvier and other Capuchins passed by Baraques, making similar grimaces. Valentine was in despair, he said that the king would never approve of this oath, and that legions of angels would

come down from heaven to hinder the bad priests from taking it. All the villages thought as he did, without knowing why, but because the Capuchins had said so.

Maitre Jean himself seemed cast down, his fat cheeks looked quite flabby, and when, after church, Dame Catherine went out, with her apron up to her eyes, he looked at me, with a pale face, and said—

“Michel, what do you think of all this?”

“I think, Maitre Jean,” said I, “that it is all done to frighten the purchasers of the church property. These monks are not real priests. While the poor village curés fulfilled all the duties of religion, plodding through the mountain districts day and night, consoling the poor wretches who have been sacrificed to the avarice and cruelty of the nobles, and while they had only their tithe of the corn, which brings them hardly anything in this country, where rye is the chief crop, these idle monks lived in plenty, and set a shameful example of drunkenness, idleness, and debauchery—they had the fat of the land!

And now that by the sale of the church property the proud vicar has seven hundred livres, and the poor curé twelve hundred, they would be great fools to sacrifice themselves to the bishops, who treated them with insolent contempt. I am sure that every curé who has courage and good sense will take the oath ; and that, if many refuse to take it, the reason will be that they are afraid of those proud and imperious men, who never forgive, and not from any conscientious motive, but because they think they owe more to those egotists than to their country."

Maitre Jean listened to me with pleasure, and tapped me on the shoulder, as he replied—

"Michel, what you say is true. Unhappily the people, and especially women, are brought up in ignorance ; all we can do is to support the patrie and defend the Constitution when the enemies unite to attack it."

Just as Maitre Jean was saying this, Catherine came in, and spoke to her—

"Catherine. I saw a weary face, with the sight of my face,




I shall go and restore my land at Prekelholz to the Tiercelins—and you know what I paid for it, in ready money. Then we shall be ruined, and Brother Benedict and all the other rascals will laugh at us. You will see whether the Tiercelins, the bishops, the nobles, or the king, will give us back my money, which has helped to pay the debts they have contracted without us, and in spite of us.”

He was angry, and his wife hurried away into the kitchen without a word, for she did not know how to answer him.

The same sort of thing was taking place in every household, trouble and disturbance were universal, and before I went home that night, I felt sure my mother would attack me about the oath, as if it were any concern of mine.

I did not deceive myself. She sided with those who had brought all our misery, and that same evening she predicted my eternal perdition, because I would not acknowledge that the National Assembly were a lot of Jews and heretics, banded together for the overthrow of the religion of our Lord. She



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overwhelmed me with reproaches, but I made her no answer ; for a long time past I submitted to my mother, even when she was totally unjust. My father did not dare to raise his voice, and I pitied him sincerely.

## CHAPTER II.

THERE was nothing new for three or four days. The National Assembly had decreed—"That the oath of the bishops, of the *ci-devant* archbishops and curés, to be faithful to the nation, to watch with care over the faithful of their parishes and their districts, and to maintain the Constitution with all their strength," should be taken within the week following the publication of the decree, on a Sunday, after mass. It was to be administered in the episcopal church to the bishops, *ci-devant* archbishops, vicars, superiors and directors of seminaries ; and in the parish church to the curés, their vicars, and all other ecclesiastics, in the presence of the general council of the communes and the faithful. All who intended to take the oath

were enjoined to declare their intention to the municipality of their district two days previously, and all such as should not have taken it within a certain period to be specified, would be regarded as having renounced their office, and would be replaced by the electors, according to the Constitution decreed, on the 12th of July.

Everyone was waiting for Sunday, to see how many, and which of the curés would take the oath, and in the meantime the monks were caballing, all the orders and congregations which had been abolished were re-appearing, the confusion was increasing. But, at the same time, as it was perfectly well understood that the bishops and nobles were playing their great game, and that, if they won it, they would recover all their goods and privileges, the citizens, the workmen, the peasants, and the soldiers, held together. I mean, of course, those who gloried in honouring and obeying their country, and who placed France, liberty, and justice, above all.

Maitre Jean had said to me that we should

go together to Lutzelbourg, to see his friend Christophe, who until now had been entirely of our opinion concerning the lazy monks. As a report was current in the country that not a single curé would swear, we had our doubts about him. But Christophe was a man of good sense and great heart, who saw all things in their simplicity, and was never embarrassed about his duty; and so, on Thursday evening, the 3rd of January, 1791, while we were working in the forge, and the snow was falling heavily, the curé Christophe, with his huge umbrella, his old hat, and his shabby soutane, leaned over our little half-door, and cried—

“Good day, Jean! What heavy snow! If this lasts, we shall have it two feet deep to-morrow.”

“Why it’s Christophe!” said Maitre Jean, laying aside his hammer. “Come into the tavern.”

“No, it is getting dark. I have just made my declaration in the town, and I did not like to pass by without telling you that the oath is to be taken on Sunday, after mass.

If you and Michel could come, you would do me a pleasure."

"Then you will take the oath?"

"Yes, next Sunday. But old Steffen is waiting for me. We will talk about this another time."

Maitre Jean then went out with him, and I remained with Valentine, whose face had suddenly lengthened, and who was looking stupidly out of his round eyes.

I was very glad; it gave me pleasure to see the curé, old Steffen, and Maitre Jean outside, talking quietly in the midst of the large snow-flakes. They shook hands, and M. Christophe called out to me, before he set off, with old Steffen carefully sheltered under his umbrella—

"You will come, Michel? I reckon on you!"

Presently Maitre Jean came in, radiant.

"Who could have spread the report that the curés would refuse to swear?" said he. "I was quite sure that sensible men who are not scarce in France, thank God!—would agree with us, and not with obstinate fools in

their old ideas about convents and abbeys, the grandeur of the nobles, and the insignificance of the people—as if we were not descended from Father Adam, and all noble ! Ha, ha, ha !”

Maitre Jean had no moderation in him when he was in good spirits. He had no kinder names for those who had not the same ideas as himself than rascals, and rabble. This made me feel very sorry for our old journeyman, who made no answer, and would remain silent and gloomy for days together.

I felt that this could not last,—that Maitre Jean was putting himself in the wrong, and that, one day or other, Valentine would lose patience and answer him boldly.

Fortunately, on this particular day, Nicole came to call us to supper. Each put on his jacket, and we separated as usual without a collision.

The next day it became known that the curé Off, of Phalsbourg, and his vicar, M. Himmel, had not made their declaration at the municipality ; but the almoner of

the regiment of La Fère, M. Joseph Hector, had made his.

There was a great deal of talk about this ; it was the great affair of the day, and, Sunday being come, Maitre Jean, Létumier, Cochart, and I—to say nothing of a number of other patriots from the city and from Baraques, went down to Lutzembourg.

The snow had ceased to fall. The little white church was full of people come from the mountain to witness the ceremony. It was believed that many had come with evil intentions, but it would have required a great deal more than this excitement to rouse the people against Christophe, whom they all loved and respected. Besides, his brother Materne, and some other red giants of his family, had come down from Dagsbourg. The choir was full of them, and if one had felt any inclination to make a disturbance, it would have been speedily removed by the sight of their long backs, broad shoulders, hooked noses, and great wood-cutters' hands, which could have pitched the whole crowd out of doors,



and then pummelled them, severally, in the street.

Everything went off quietly. The curé said his mass, and then, coming forward to the steps of the choir, facing the spectators, he held up his hand, and said, in a loud voice, which could be heard at a distance :

“I swear to watch with zeal over the faithful whose direction is confided to me. I swear to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king. I swear to maintain the French Constitution with all my power, and especially the decree relative to the civil constitution of the clergy.”

A little while afterwards the crowd went out. M. Christophe was still in his sacristy ; Maitre Jean and I, big Materne and his relations, were waiting for him in the church. Outside all was quiet, and the people were going away. At last the curé came and brought us into the presbytery. On the way Maitre Jean said to him laughingly :

“Well, everything has gone on quietly. The Capuchins have made a great noise to no purpose.”

M. Christophe was thoughtful.

"The danger may come," he said, "but, provided we do our duty, the rest is of no consequence."

The round table in his little room was laid for dinner. He said grace, and we sat down and ate in silence.

The curé's mother served us. She did not speak, and her eyes were red. We were all sad.

Towards the end of dinner she went out, and M. Christophe said :

"You see, trouble and sorrow are beginning everywhere. It will be the same in all our homes. The poor woman has been weeping. The Capuchins have more weight with her than I. She believes that I am damned. And what can I say to her? What can I do?"

"Never mind," replied Maitre Jean, who was much affected, "my wife is also grieving ; but all that will be changed. The rogues will be turned out, and good sense will have its way."

Then the curé spoke some words which have never left my memory :

“ It is not so easy as you think, Jean,” said he, “ for our noble bishops would rather see everything perish than lose their goods and their privileges ; and therefore it is that they have forbidden us to take the oath to the Constitution, which deprives them of that which they place far above religion. Is the Constitution opposed to our holy Gospels ? No ; they know that very well. It is in accordance with our faith.

“ Seventeen hundred years ago the rights of man were predicted by our Lord. He said, ‘ Love one another, for ye are brethren.’ He said, ‘ Sell all your goods, and follow me, and give your money to the poor.’ But they, far from selling their goods, are always amassing more,—they, far from desiring the equality of men, only court new honours, privileges, and distinctions for themselves,—they, far from wishing that the will of God should be done on earth as it is in heaven, are puffed up with pride, are full of avarice, and delight in the abasement of their fellows.

“This Constitution, which agrees with the Gospel, makes them indignant. How could they endure that the curés and the bishops should be nominated by the people, who care for nothing but virtue, and would place the humblest and lowliest pastors above them as in the time of the holy martyrs. They prefer to be nominated by Pompadours and Dubarrys, and harlots of their kind, who ask only fine manners, low bows, genuflections great names, and mellifluous talk, which a poor country curé knows nothing about. It is to such as they we owe the De Rohans, the Dubots, and others, who bring everlasting opprobrium upon our religion.

“Would the people have chosen them? No! They would have flung them out like dirt; every honest man turned from them with horror. Well, then, when the Constitution declares that such wretches as these shall have no place in its good graces,—that the people shall select according to their needs, they feel that their reign is ended,—that, if this law be confirmed, their time is up. And if the poor curés whom they

despised so much remain at the head of their flocks,—if they preach peace, order, and submission to the laws made by the deputies of the nation—which is their duty—this good Constitution will be confirmed, the curés will be strong, honoured, and respected. They will establish the reign of the Gospel. If rogues present themselves to disturb the country, they will be there, the first to set an example of devotion and courage, to oppose the spirit of evil; and the glorious revolution, announced by the Saviour, will be accomplished peacefully and for ever.

“This is just what they do not want. They desire trouble, they want to stir up war between us; and when brother shall be fighting against brother, when everything shall be severed, and overturned—then they will come from Coblentz, and Worms, and elsewhere, at the head of the Prussians, the Austrians, and the Russians, to put the yoke on us again, and to rebuild their privileges on the ruins of the Gospel and of the rights of man.

“This is all they want, and they call it

policy. Was Jesus Christ a politician? If he had had a policy, would he have allowed himself to be crucified for the salvation of the unhappy and the wicked? Would not he, the descendant of King David, have ranged himself on the side of the kings against the people? Would he not have listened to the promptings of the demon of pride, when he said to him, on the brow of the mountain, 'Look at this country, these villages, these rivers, and these mountains! All these are mine, and I will give them to thee, if thou wilt bow down and worship me!' Don't you think that Rohan and the others would have prostrated themselves very quickly, with their faces to the earth? But our Lord had no policy, and I, a poor village curé, listen to Him, I take Him for my model, and not those proud bishops who live like pagans. Yes, I will always obey the Gospel, and I will never conspire with the foreigner."

He was silent for a moment, and very pale. Big Materne, of La Houpe, stretched out his hand to him, saying—

"You are right, Christophe! We will be on the side of our Lord Jesus Christ, against Cardinal de Rohan. I have seen him, we have seen him with that woman—another man's wife! What an abomination!"

The mountaineers made the sign of the cross, while I shuddered; and Maitre Jean cried—

"Yes, we have seen plenty of scandals. If the people still continue religious, it is not the fault of these wretches. But when, after all this, they think we are going to take their commands for gospel, they deceive themselves."

"Without doubt," said Christophe, "they have forfeited our respect; but, I forewarn you, they will soon calumniate the poor curés who have submitted to the laws of their country, by taking the oath; they will make us out to be renegades. We shall have much to suffer, but, though every one should abandon me—father, mother, brothers, sisters, friends, and all the world—I am satisfied, provided my conscience is easy, and I walk with my God.

“ All I hope is, that, with their policy of disturbance and civil war, these men may not cause the ruin of our king, our unhappy queen, and those who surround them. The people once let loose, their violence will surpass anything that we can imagine beforehand ; and if much blood be spilled, it will be the fault of the bishops, because, by forbidding the curés to take the oath, they place them under suspicion by the nation, they alienate their flocks from them, they accustom honest men to regard religion as the most formidable enemy of liberty, equality, and fraternity, of all the great Christian principles proclaimed by the new constitution. God knows what may happen in the trouble !”

Thus spake this good and wise man. Two years later, in 1793, when I used to see tumbrils passing by to the guillotine, full of women, old men, priests, citizens, workmen, and peasants, how often have I said to myself—

“ There goes the policy of the priests and the émigrés.”

Cardinal de Rohan, the Count d'Artois,



and their friends, were at the other side of the Rhine at this time, and my lords the bishops were explaining the Apocalypse at Constance. They looked on from a distance, but did not come to La Vendée, or the South, where the refractory priests were marching bravely at the head of the peasants who had revolted!

They must have thought—"What fools these men must be, to let themselves be massacred for creatures of our kind!" And it was true; the wretched peasants of the West might have inscribed upon their colours—"Servitude, Ignorance, and Poverty!" for it was for these things they were fighting.

Two or three times the Count d'Artois announced that he was coming to put himself at the head of the Vendéans; and he did approach the coast on board an English ship, but when the peasants had risen, and he heard the republican cannon, this brave prince went off with all speed, and left the poor devils alone to fight for his divine right. You will hear all this later. There never was such cowardice seen in the world before!

I have no more to tell you about this day, except that we talked with M. Christophe about the oath, and the affairs of the nation, until two o'clock, and then we all went away, leaving the curé to go and sing vespers.

It was frightfully cold on the hillside. Maitre Jean stepped out quickly, as he said—

“All has gone on well. The Capuchins have been foiled, and my land at Pickelholtz is worth more to-day than it was worth yesterday.”

I was thinking of what M. Christophe had said to us about the policy of the noble bishops and the émigrés. It made me thoughtful, and I did not think the horizon by any means clear.

## CHAPTER III.

**A**BOUT this time great changes took place at the forge, and I must tell you all about them, because, though they grieved me at first, they were in reality the cause of all the happiness of my life.

You must know, then, that Valentine took his meals at the house of our neighbour Rigaud. He was happy with these old people, who called him Monsieur Valentine. His ideas about the differences of rank made this very agreeable to him. Every evening he sat in the one arm-chair of the house before a good omelette or a dish of meat, a measure of wine on his right hand, a carafe of water on his left, and his feet in his slippers, while the two old people at the other end of the table

supped on potatoes and milk. Valentine thought this the simplest thing in the world, and no doubt said to himself,—

“I am of higher rank than these people, and that is why I eat these good things and they merely smell them.”

Every time that bread was baked at Rigaud's house, which was generally once in three weeks, he would have two good *kisches*, as we call our rich buttered cakes, put into the oven for him, and he always invited me to share them. He had some white Lorraine wine in the cellar, and on these occasions he opened a bottle. It never came into his head to offer a glass to poor old Rigaud, which distressed me very much, especially as I saw the old couple look at us with envious eyes while we ate and drank. But I did not venture to say a word about it to Valentine. He would probably never have invited me again, in his anger at my oblivion of the barriers of our rank.

Sometimes he told me to bring my brother Stephen, whose good appetite made us laugh.

Valentine<sup>9</sup> was very fond of him, and after vespers on Sundays he used to show him all his secrets for rearing, feeding, and catching birds, for he loved birds,—whether he ate them or listened to their singing they made him happy.

At the end of July his room on Rigaud's first-floor was full of birds which he had caught in the woods. He had hundreds of them of all kinds. The singing birds, such as linnets and nightingales, which live on worms and flies, he let loose before winter ; the others, who live on seeds, he kept. The little passage leading to his room was full of dried poppies, flax-seed, and millet-seed, hung on lines, and which he had grown in a little plot of ground behind the cottage, to feed his birds.

This was his life. During the winter, when the snow fell, he prepared his lines and snares, and could not talk of anything but the thrushes, and blackbirds, and the number he hoped to take in the year.

Before the Revolution I had literally never

heard him talk of anything else, and he was always light-hearted; but since the States General he had become both sad and bitter. Every evening, even while he was arranging his snares and lines, he complained of the pride and folly of Maitre Jean, and he would shrug his shoulders and say :

“That man never talks anything but nonsense now-a-days. He fancies all the cobblers are going to be colonels, the woodcutters princes, and the Maitres Jeans deputies. Nothing is too great for a patriot of his kind; he thinks he already owns Monseigneur the Cardinal's forests, and may pay for them in assignats. He is perfectly indifferent to the invincible armies of the king, to the excommunications, and to the succours which we may expect from all Christendom.”

He laughed bitterly, and even at the forge, instead of holding his tongue, he flung many an ill-natured gibe at the National Assembly, the citizen guard, and all those who sided with the notion.

It was a great annoyance to Maitre Jean

to be obliged to listen to him, and to have a journeyman in whose presence he could not declaim against the nobles and the priests uncontradicted. He restrained himself as much as possible, but on days when we received bad news he would puff, and blow, and mutter, and at length burst out with :

“ Ah, the wretches ! ah, the rascals ! ” without mentioning names.

Valentine understood perfectly that he was thinking of the nobles, or the bishops, and he replied, also without mentioning names :

“ You are right ; rascals and wretches of all sorts are not scarce in the world ! ”

“ Nor fools either ! ”

And Valentine would reply :

“ Ah, I believe you ; especially those who think themselves very knowing. They are the worst. ”

And in this way they went on. I often saw Maitre Jean turn red and Valentine turn pale with anger, and said to myself :

“ They will come to blows.”

But, until M. Christophe took the oath, all these little disputes came to nothing. During the month of January, 1791, something fresh occurred every day. We learned that the curé of this or that village had taken the oath,—that M. Off had been replaced by M. Dusable,—that all the curés in the National Assembly, headed by the Abbé Gregoire, had renewed the oath, &c.

Maitre Jean was full of enthusiasm. He puffed and blew ; he laughed, and sang “ *Ca ira, ça ira,*” and Valentine became more and more grave. I began to think he was afraid of Maitre Jean, and did not dare to get angry, when one morning the news arrived that the bishop of Autun, Talleyrand-Perigord, was going to consecrate the bishops who had taken the oath, in spite of the prohibition of the Pope.

Maitre Jean was so delighted at this that he began to declare that Talleyrand-Perigord was a true apostle of Christ ;—that he had proposed the sale of the goods of the



clergy,—that he had celebrated Mass at the Champ de Mars on the altar of the country on the occasion of the federation, and that he was now about to crown his fame by consecrating the bishops;—that this sensible man deserved the esteem of all honest people, and that the refractory bishops were asses in comparison with him.

Valentine had been listening to him, and quietly going on with his work, but now he suddenly went up close to him, and said :

“ You are saying all this at me ? Yes, yes, I know very well you are saying it at me ! Listen, then, to what I have to say. Your Talleyrand-Perigord is a base, cowardly Judas. Do you hear ? a Judas ! And every one who sings his praises is a Judas like him ! ” And, as Maitre Jean recoiled with amazement, he went on—“ Asses, are they ? Our bishops are asses ? No, it is you who are an ass—a vain creature, full of pride and folly ! ”

When he heard this, Maitre Jean rushed

at him, but Valentine raised his hammer and shouted—

“Don’t dare to touch me !”

His face was terrible, and if I had not flung myself between them, as quick as lightning, a dreadful misfortune might have happened.

“In the name of Heaven,” I cried, “Maitre Jean ! Valentine ! what are you thinking about ?”

Then they both turned pale. Maitre Jean tried to speak, but he could not ; he was choking with anger ; and Valentine, flinging his hammer into a corner, said—

“Now it is over. There’s an end of it. I have put up with more than enough for the last two years. You will have to find another journeyman.”

“Yes,” said Maitre Jean, stammering in his anger, “I have had quite enough of an aristocrat of your sort.”

On which Valentine said—

“You will settle with me, if you please, at once. And you will give me a certificate for the fifteen years I have worked in your forge

—do you hear? A certificate, whether good or bad. I want to see what a patriot like you can say against an aristocrat like me.”

Then he walked out, carrying his jacket on his arm. He put it on outside the door, as he went into Rigaud's house.

Maitre Jean was thunderstruck.

“The rascal!” said he.

Then after a few minutes he asked me—

“What do you think of such an animal as that?”

“Of course he is a fool,” I replied; “that is quite clear, but at the same time he is a brave fellow, an honest journeyman, and a capital smith. You have been wrong, Maitre Jean, in vexing him so much for a long time past.”

“How! I have been wrong!”

“Certainly,” I said. “You are losing a good journeyman, and a true friend, and you are losing him by your own fault. You ought not to have tried him too far.”

He appeared quite surprised, but at last he said—

“I was the master. If I had not been the

master, it would have been so much the worse for him just now ! Never mind, Michel, you say what you think, and you are right. I am sorry for what has occurred ; yes, I am very sorry, but it cannot be undone now ! How was I to believe that a man could be such a fool ?”

Seeing that he was repenting, I said no more, but put on my jacket and went to Rigaud's, to try to put things to rights between them, for I loved Valentine, and I could not believe that we could live without each other. Maitre Jean understood very well what I was about, but he said nothing, and went into his tavern.

As I opened Rigaud's door, I heard Valentine telling the two old people what had just occurred. They were listening to him in consternation. I interrupted him.

“ Valentine,” I said, “ you must not leave us ; it is impossible ; you must forget all this. Maitre Jean asks nothing better. Do not suppose he has any grudge against you ; on the contrary, he loves and esteems you—I am sure of that.”

"Yes," said old Rigaud, "he has told me so a hundred times."

"What good does that do me?" replied Valentine. "Before the States-General I loved that man, but since he has taken advantage of the misfortunes of the time to secure the goods of the Church to himself I regard him as a robber. And then," he cried, seating himself, and striking the table with his clenched fist, "it is this pride of his, which makes out all men to be equal, which enrages me. His spirit of plunder will be his destruction, mark my words, and it is just it should be so. As for you, Michel, you are not guilty of anything, your evil destiny has thrown you into the society of a Maitre Jean and a Chauvel; but it is not your fault. If things had remained in their proper order, in five or six years hence you might have bought a business for yourself. I would have helped you. I have sixteen hundred livres saved, and lodged at Boileau's, in Phalsbourg; you might have married like a Christian, we should have worked together, and the old

journeyman would always have been respected by your children."

Tears stood in his eyes while he was speaking, and I could only repeat—

"No, Valentine, you shall not go away, it is impossible!"

But he passed his hand across his eyes, rose, and said in a firm voice—

"This is Thursday—on Saturday, early in the morning, I shall go away. A man must fulfil his duty, and to remain in a place where one risks the loss of one's soul is wicked, even criminal. I ought to have left this place long since, but the weakness of old custom held me back. Now, all is over, and I am glad of it. You will tell Maitre Jean Leroux that I wish everything to be arranged by to-morrow evening. I will not speak to him any more—he would imagine that he could convert me."

Then, without another word, he went up to his room, and I crossed the street to the "Three Pigeons," where Nicole was laying the cloth for dinner, feeling very sad. Dame Catherine looked grave, Maitre Jean was

walking up and down the room, with his hands behind him and his head bent.

“ Well ? ” said he.

“ Well, Maitre Jean, he is going away on Saturday, early in the morning. He told me to tell you so that everything may be settled.”

“ Very well. His sixty livres for the month are there, and his certificate shall be drawn up, since he is determined to go away. But go, Michel, and tell him that I have no spite against him ; tell him that I invite him to dine with us, and that no one shall speak of nobles, or Capuchins, or patriots ; go and tell him that from me. And tell him that two old companions like us ought to be able to shake hands and drink a bottle of good wine together before we part, without agreeing in our politics.”

I saw that his heart was full, and I dared not tell him that Valentine would not even speak to him.

At that moment Valentine passed under our windows, with his stick in his hand, going towards the town. No doubt he was going

to get his money at the notary's. Maitre Jean opened a window, and called to him—

“Valentine, Valentine!”

But he went on, without turning his head. Then Maitre Jean grew angry again.

“The fellow will not listen to me,” he said, shutting the window: “he has a bad, spiteful temper. I did wrong, I repented of having said too much—but now I am glad. Eh, aristocrat, so you would not even listen to me!”

While he spoke, he was opening his bureau, which stood in the corner, and then he said—

“Sit down there, Michel, and I will dictate his certificate.”

I thought he was going to give Valentine a bad certificate, and I ventured to tell him that he would be more calm after dinner, and had better do it then.

“No,” he replied, roughly, “I want to get this done at once, and then never to remember it again.”

I sat down then, and Maitre Jean, in spite of his anger, dictated the best certificate it



would be possible to imagine. He said that Valentine was an excellent workman, a brave, faithful, honest, and upright man, whose loss he deeply regretted, but that private affairs deprived him of this well-tried journeyman, whom he recommended to all master blacksmiths as a model of excellence. After he had made me read the document to him, he signed it, and said—

“That is quite as it should be. You will take it to him this evening, or to-morrow, with his money. Let him see whether it is right, and give you a receipt. If he asks you to go a bit of the way with him, as is our custom, do so. I give you a holiday on Saturday. And now let us go to dinner.”

. The soup was on the table, and we sat down.

All that day nothing new occurred. Valentine did not reappear at Baraques, and next day I went to his room, and found him putting his cages, his snares, and his lines in order. I gave him the certificate, which he read, and then put in his pocket, without a

word. He counted his money, and wrote out a receipt.

"All is in order now," said he. "I give all my birds, cages, and seeds to you, and your little brother Stephen. You can do as you please with them."

I thanked him, with tears in my eyes, for Stephen and myself. Then he said—

"You will accompany me, at eight o'clock to-morrow, as far as the turn to Saverne. Maitre Jean cannot refuse you that."

"No," said I, "he has given me the whole day."

"That is the custom," he replied briefly. "We shall set out at eight exactly."

I then left him, and on Saturday morning we started, as agreed. I carried his bag, and he plodded through the snow behind me, leaning on his stick, and walking in my tracks, for, though he was very strong in the arms, his legs were easily tired.

I shall never forget that day, not only on account of the masses of snow which we had to get through, and of the view of Alsace which we enjoyed from the top of the hill

when we saw it for twenty leagues, as far as the Rhine, with its villages, and its forests, all white, but also on account of what Valentine said to me at the tavern of l'Arbre Vert, which we reached at nine o'clock. The carriers generally stopped there, but in the month of January there was no traffic on this road.

The little tavern, which stood on the side of a bank, surrounded with fir-trees, was half-buried in the snow; we could only see the path where two or three persons had trodden since the day before, and the little windows, which had been cleared by brooms. Only for the smoke, which came out of the roof, one would have thought that everything in the place was dead. We went in, and saw an old woman asleep beside the hearth, her foot on her spinning-wheel. We had to waken her, and then a Spitz dog, with long white hair, a feathery tail, a sharp nose, and upright ears, began to bark under the table, where he had hidden himself in fear of us.

The old woman, who had wide black ribbons on her head, spoke nothing but German.

Her husband had just gone to Saverne for provisions. She brought us wine, a piece of hard bread, and some cheese. Valentine placed his bag on the bench, and sat near it, with his stick between his knees, and his hands crossed on the top of it. I sat opposite to him, and the old woman fell asleep again while making believe to spin.

"We are going to part here, Michel," said Valentine. "To your health!"

"To yours!" I replied, sorrowfully.

"Yes," said he, after he had drank gravely, "now I am content; my conscience is easy; I have taken up my staff of travel, and I am on the road to my salvation. Long since I ought to have gone away; I am guilty of having remained in the bondage of iniquity within the walls of Babylon. It is my fault! —it is my great fault! Habit, and my weakness, are the causes of it!"

He went on in the same style for several minutes, and it seemed to me that I was listening to my mother after she had been at mass said by one of the refractory priests in the mountains, and when the Capuchin

Eléonor spoke by her mouth. Finally, he lifted up his eyes, stretched out his long arms, and said—

“The hour of mercy has come! There is pardon for every sin! I am among the last, but it is never too late. Thy mercy, O my God, is infinite!”

“But, Valentine, where are you going?” I asked him.

“I can tell you,” said he, looking at me, as if to see whether he ought to answer me, “for your heart is with us, though you do not know it; your delusions come from others; and I know I may trust you not to tell any one. But, even if you did tell, what could it matter? That which is written, is written; the ruin of Babylon is decreed—before this snow shall have melted, each one shall be recompensed according to his deeds. But you shall be spared—yes, you shall be spared! But these trees—look at them, Michel, and mark my words—they shall bend under the weight of the patriots who shall be hanged upon them, and their branches shall be broken.”

All these extravagances made a painful impression upon me.

"No doubt, Valentine," I said ; "I believe you ; all this is very possible. But, in the meantime, where are you going ?"

"I am going to Mayence," he answered—  
"I am going to join our good princes, and, first of all, that man after God's own heart, the Count d'Artois. It is in him we put our trust. From Mayence we shall go to Lyons, which is to become the capital of the kingdom, for the other is polluted, and one stone of it shall not remain. General Bender has already brought the patriots of the Low Countries to their senses ; and now it is the turn of profaned and disgraced France. You will see, Michel, you will see ! The cavalry, the infantry, the artillery, the uhlans, and the pandours will all march together ! They will come in by Savoy, by Liege, by Switzerland, and the Spanish frontier, and our lords will march at their head, to deliver the poor martyr who suffers for our sins. Then there shall be peace for men of good will !—peace for the humble !—peace for submissive and

faithful subjects ! but war for the proud, for the Antichrists, for the purchasers of stolen property ! No pity for such men as Jean Leroux, Létumier, and Elof Collin — the hempen cravat is ready for them ! You will have nothing to fear ; you are a good lad, who work for your old father and mother, and you are safe. You will recover your good sense in time. Only, when our princes are in Alsace, or near Metz, you must not go against them with the others—you must not sustain the revolt. Not one will escape, I tell you ; the Count d'Artois has arranged everything, so do not stir—let Létumier, Cochart, and Maitre Jean go by themselves. The soldiers will turn against them—they are all for our princes. But first the Babylon of iniquity—the rascally Parisians — are to be exterminated.”

I looked at Valentine's head, shaped like a sugar-loaf, and thought, “The unfortunate old fellow is going mad !”

And I answered him quietly—

“But you are going to Mayence, Valentine.

What are you going to do there? You are not a soldier—and then, your age!”

“Ah,” he cried, “work will not be wanting; I shall find enough to do. I intend to go into a cavalry regiment as blacksmith, and thus I shall work out my salvation.”

I said nothing, and as we had emptied the bottle, and he would take no more, we rose, he buckled his bag, and we went out, in the midst of violent barking on the part of *Spitz*, who had regained his courage.

Outside the tavern, we parted, with a hearty embrace; and the poor old fellow went away along the road to St. Jean des Choux. I looked after him for some minutes; he was plodding through the snow bravely, and holding himself up like a lad of twenty years old.

I went back to Baraques, thinking of what Valentine had said, it is true, but regarding it all as utter folly. I did not then know that there was a kind of freemasonry among the kings and nobles of Europe, that they were neither French, nor Germans, nor Russians, but, before all, nobles, and that they



lent each other aid, succour, and assistance in keeping the people under the yoke.

This idea seemed too horrible—I could not bring myself to believe it.

It was near noon when I reached the “Three Pigeons.”

“Ha, there you are,” said my godfather. “You have come back in time for dinner. He is gone?”

“Yes, Maitre Jean.”

“Which way?”

I was puzzled what to say, and he saw it, but he did not require my answer.

“I see,” said he, “he has gone to join the émigrés at Coblentz. I thought as much.”

Then, sitting down, he said—

“Let us eat our dinner, and think no more of the poor fool.”

All dinner time he seemed very happy.

“We are alone now, Michel,” he said, “and we can say what we please. But the time has come for taking some further steps. I am pleased with you—you have always given me satisfaction. You are not yet so good a workman as Valentine, for he was

really a first-rate smith, but you have a thousand times more sense than he had, and skill will come in time. You and I will never disagree."

When dinner was over, I was about to retire, but he put his hand upon my arm—

"Stay where you are," he said, "I want to talk with you. Catherine, let us have another bottle. Everything must be settled to-day."

Dame Catherine went out. I was astonished at Maitre Jean's good humour, and felt that he was going to tell me something pleasant. His wife brought us the wine, and then went away again to help Nicole to wash the plates and dishes, and we remained alone.

"We shall not be disturbed," said Maitre Jean, as he filled his glass; "in this snowy weather no one will come to the tavern."

He swallowed his wine slowly, and went on, in a thoughtful tone—

"You must know, Michel, that my land at Pickelholtz is the best in the Lixheim district. I saw that the last time I was there, for I went all about the place. It is strong

soil, mixed with lime and sand. Everything ought to grow in abundance in it, but those lazy Tiercelins allowed it to lie waste. The river overflows it at the foot of the hill, the meadows are a mere marsh, full of water-grass which the cattle will not eat. Nothing would have been easier than to have given a bend to the water, by clearing it of the willows which have encumbered it for centuries, but the idle beggars did not care to do it. They brought enough provision home to the convent in their bag every evening—hams were actually found rotting on the floor of their store-room. What a set! On the high ground everything was allowed to run to waste, the old walnut and pear trees spread their branches out, untrimmed, and covered everything with their shade. The plough and the hatchet will have plenty to do there; I shall have firewood for three or four years out of the waste. It is no trifling task to put one hundred and fifty acres of land into good order, to dig, sow, and manure that which has not had a farthing's worth of manure bestowed upon it for centuries. This land ought to

have brought me in two thousand four hundred livres this year, and it has not brought me in six hundred. You may judge from that how the idleness and supineness of these monks have ruined the country. However, I am going to change all this. I have already had the roof of the little farm-house, which was falling to pieces, repaired, the worm-eaten beams of the barn removed, and the stables paved. Now everything is getting right, and I shall require an immense quantity of manure. To have manure I must have cattle, and I am going to procure them. Catherine's little property at Fleisheim has been profitable, I have done very well with the tavern, and I see my way to doing all I want. Only, I cannot always live here; the first necessity for a peasant is to be on his land, to be able to see that the work is really done, that his cattle are well tended, his crops properly weeded, and so on. I must be on the spot. I shall not come more than once or twice a week to Baraques. Catherine can keep the tavern without my assistance, but I must have a man at the head of the smithy,

and I have chosen you. You shall be the master blacksmith in my place, Michel. You must look out for a journeyman, for all that responsibility will rest upon you, and the journeyman ought to suit the master. From to-day I give you fifty livres a month instead of thirty. And that is not all—with industry and good conduct things will improve. I love you; you are a good lad; I have brought you up, I may say; I am your godfather; I have no children—you understand!"

He was quite affected, and, as for me, I could only say to him—

"Oh, Maitre Jean, you make a man of me, and if by attachment to you I can deserve your kindness, I *do* deserve it."

"And by your good conduct also," he said, pressing my hand, "and your attachment to your family. If I had a son I should wish him to be like you. And now we understand each other. Until the spring we shall go on working together. I will teach you what there remains for you to learn, and in the meantime you will look about for a

man, and everything shall be settled as I have said."

If there are great sorrows in this life, surely it has also its bright days. When Maitre Jean had made me a past-master, I felt that delicious pride which comes of being something oneself, and not having to await anyone's orders. The idea of Marguerite's happiness, when she should hear this great news, filled me with joy. But that which gave me the most satisfaction was knowing that with my fifty livres a month I should be able to pay for my brother Stephen's board at Lutzelbourg, and to have him taught by M. Christophe, so that in time he might become a schoolmaster himself. This was the greatest happiness to me, because I had always been afraid of having to leave my infirm brother a charge upon the village, if anything happened to me. Therefore, thinking of the joy which my father would feel, I asked Maitre Jean permission to run home. He, "and many all be a very few to reach

home. My father, Stephen, and Mathurine were plaiting baskets, and were astonished to see me at this time of day. My mother was occupied in some household business—she merely turned her head, and went on with whatever she was doing.

“What has happened, Michel?” said my father.

I cried out in the fulness of my joy :

“Maitre Jean is going to give me fifty livres a month. Valentine has gone away ; I am put in his place, and I have fifty livres ! Maitre Jean has told me that at the end of the winter he intends to go to Pickelholtz to farm his land, and then I am to remain at the forge, in his place, as master. I am to do everything, and I may choose a journeyman for myself now.”

Then my father, raising his hands, said—

“Ah ! my God, is this possible ? Now, my child, we may indeed say that you are rewarded for your good conduct towards us !”

He had stood up while speaking, and I ran to him and caught him in my arms.

“It will be such a good thing for Stephen, father,” said I, holding him close to me. “I have been wishing for a long time that I could send him to M. Christophe to be taught, that he might become a schoolmaster ; but the money was wanting——”

Before I could finish my sentence, my mother interrupted me by crying out—

“No, he shall not go ! I don’t choose him to become a heathen !”

As she said this, my father turned suddenly round, looked at her, and said, in a voice which we had never heard before—

“But I say he shall go ! Who is the master here ? You say you do not wish it ? Well, then, *I do* wish it—do you understand ? Ah ! when your son, the best of sons, comes to rescue his poor brother from misery and ignorance, that is all you have to say to him ! It is Nicholas whom you love, is it not ? and Lisbeth ? Those who have forsaken us, who would let us perish with hunger—yes, you and me, and the children, and everyone !—But you love *them* !”

His anger was so terrible, that it made us



all tremble. My mother looked at him in amazement, and made no attempt to reply. He went up to her slowly, stopped when he was within two steps of her, and said, in a thick voice, looking at her from head to foot—

“You wicked woman! You haven’t one good word for your child—for him to whom you owe your daily bread!”

Then she threw herself into my arms, and said—

“Yes, yes! he is a good boy—a good son!”

I felt that she loved me, in spite of all, and I was softened. The children wept, but my father was not to be readily appeased. He stood there, his eyes shining terribly out of his pale face, looking at us, and then, saying: “It is good to have such a son!” he burst into loud sobs, and so that which should have made us joyful, looked very like despair.

However, we were very soon calm again. My father dried his eyes, put on his Sunday vest and cap, and took me by the arm.

“I am not going to work any more to-day,”

- he said ; “ let us go out together, Michel. I must thank my old friend Jean, our benefactor. Ah ! what a fortunate choice I made when I asked him to be your godfather. That idea certainly came to me from heaven.”

He went up the street, which was covered with snow. My father leaned on my arm, his eyes shone with joy ; he explained to me that I was baptized Jean-Michel, which he thought very fortunate. And as he entered the eating-room of the “ Three Pigeons,” he cried out—

“ Jean, I have come to thank you !”

Maitre Jean was very glad to see him. They sat together behind the stove until night, talking about me, about Maitre Jean’s projects, and old family matters. When supper-time came, my father sat down to table with us, and we did not reach home until half-past nine, when every one was asleep.

## CHAPTER IV.

**T**HUS began the year 1791. I put my brother Stephen to board with an old woolcarder, at Lutzembourg, for twelve francs a month. He went to M. Christophe's school, and I may say here, once for all, that he has never failed to give us the greatest satisfaction.

During the month of January, Maitre Jean explained to me what he wanted. I was not only to superintend the forge, but to write down in his book all that was bought and sold at the inn, because his wife did not know how to write. I was to keep his accounts, so that, on coming in from his farm, he would only have to glance at the bottom of the page to understand the state of his affairs.

My mother was so much astonished that

any one had dared to resist her, that for a long time she was silent and pensive, so that we were very quiet and happy.

Unfortunately, the storm outside raged more and more wildly every day. During January and February the tide of emigration was at its height. The Red Book was spread all over France, and every one knew about the scandalous pensions and gratuities which had been lavished upon noble families—amounting to fifty millions a-year ; while the poor, overwhelmed with taxes, were dying of hunger.

The nobles fled before the bitter contempt of the nation ; all the roads were covered with their carriages ; there were not sufficient relays of horses for them ; night and day we heard the rolling of the wheels and the cracking of the postillions' whips. When the gates of the town were shut, after eleven o'clock, they went round by the ramparts rather than wait until the porter could come to open them. At last the patriots began to grow uneasy.

The National Assembly was debating upon

the law of passports. Mirabeau declared that it was infamous to wish to prevent people from coming and going as they pleased, but the citizen guard did their duty in spite of him, interrogating the emigrants, and asking them what they were going to do at Coblenz, Constance, or Turin. When they would not answer, they were informed that the ladies must be taken to the lock-up house in the city, until orders should be received from the department.

Then it was quite amusing to see the change which would come over the countenances of these fine gentlemen, how mildly they would speak, how cordially they would shake hands with the patriots, calling them "friends," and drinking their wine with them at the nearest public-house, to the health of the nation. It was quite a comic spectacle ; everyone laughed, and the National Guard would let go the horses' reins, saying—

"A good journey to you, gentlemen !"

The French people have always been fond of a joke, it is in their nature.

Meantime, the troubles on account of the

civic oath were spreading ; from twelve to fifteen hundred rebels in Alsace had formed an association, under the title of "Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Citizens," to oppose the execution of the decree. They assembled to the rallying cry—

"Long live the Count d'Artois !"

The National Assembly sent commissioners to inquire what were the wishes of these people, but they only grew more insolent, and even dared to suggest that it would be convenient to hang the commissioners !

The Chevaliers de Saint Louis, and even former councillors of Parliament, were at their head. When they saw that, the patriots of Colmar and Strasbourg took stout cudgels, and dispersed the Apostolic citizens.

All the royalist newspapers announced an invasion as imminent. At Phalsbourg some of the Saxon hussars, who were strongly suspected of an intention of going over to the enemy, being on their way to Sarreguimines, were stopped by some soldiers of the regiment of La Fère, who took hold of their

bridles, and wanted to make them shout, "Long live the nation!" But the hussars drew their swords, and rode them down, and then galloped off through the French gate. The hospital was full of wounded men. This was an infamous affair, for the men of La Fère were unarmed. But, nevertheless, Louis XVI. approved of the conduct of the Saxon hussars, who, some time afterwards, were to have protected him in his escape into Austria. The regiment of La Fère was severely blamed, and they sent us in its place Royal Liégeois, which had distinguished itself six months before, under M. de Bouillé.

You may imagine the indignation of the patriots.

All the time that the Royal Liégeois remained in our part of the country, not one honest man returned the salutes of any of its officers. We had to part with our good sergeant Quèrn and all our instructors belonging to the citizen guard. We accompanied them in a body to Sarrebourg, where we all fraternised before we separated.

In the midst of these troubles we heard that the king's aunts had just made their escape with twelve millions in gold in their carriage, leaving us three millions of debts to pay, and afterwards that they had been arrested at Arnay-le-duc, in Burgundy, from whence they wrote, in their terror, the following letter to the National Assembly :

“ We do not wish to be, and we are not, according to law, any more than citizens. We are, with respect, your most humble and obedient servants.”

This letter, which made us all laugh, was, nevertheless, a very sensible one. They said no more than the simple truth, and therefore the National Assembly gave them leave to go where they pleased.

Maitre Jean was very angry ; he said they ought to have been brought back to Paris in triumph ; but I thought then, and I have always thought, that the National Assembly had done well, and that they ought to have flung all the gates in France wide open, to



induce the other nobles to go away, only giving them fair warning that they were never to attempt to come back.

Every one has his own opinion, and mine is that if Louis XVI. had reached Germany or England he would have produced precisely the same effect in either country as his brother d'Artois, neither more nor less. I am also sure that our sovereigns who went away at a later period were exceedingly sorry they had not remained, when they discovered how much easier it was to go than to get back again.

As for the king's aunts, they went to Rome, and we never heard any more about them.

The disturbance was terrible in Paris. We learned that from the newspapers which Chauvel sent us. The people were full of suspicion, and expecting some villany on the part of the nobles and the bishops. Camille Desmoulins, Fréron, and others who, like them, were cunning and daring too, warned us incessantly.

“Be on your guard! Take care you are

not surprised! A great number of your deputies of the Third Estate are bought! Leopold and William have made peace with each other that they may invade us! Attention! Be ready! No sleeping at your posts!"

One day the people of the Faubourg Saint Antoine wanted to demolish the Chateau de Vincennes as they had demolished the Bastille. Lafayette had the greatest difficulty in preventing them. On the same day five hundred nobles, armed with poniards, slipped into the king's palace by a side-door leading to the guard-room of the Swiss. When they were discovered they said they were the proper guards of the king's person. They were thrust out with some violence, and Louis XVI. declared that he did not wish for any guard but that furnished by the citizens. Nevertheless the people watched him closely from that hour.

A rumour was current that he was ill, and that his doctor advised him to move to Saint Cloud. Then the market-women went in a body to entreat him to remain in Paris, which

shows the simplicity of people who are brought up in ignorance. These poor creatures actually believed that it would be a great loss for France to let Louis XVI. go, as if peoples were not always more sure to find kings than kings to find peoples. However, good sense does not come all at once.

## CHAPTER V.

**T**OWARDS the end of March Maitre Jean went away to superintend the work which was being done on his farm, and I remained at the forge with my new journeyman, Simon Bernerotte, a stout, red-bearded, heavy, strong-armed fellow.

It rained every day, as it generally does in spring, and very few carriages passed through Baraques ; but we had a good job to do for the church at Phalsbourg. It was the screen, which is still to be seen in the choir. Maitre Jean had desired me to put it up before he left for the farm, and I went every morning to work in the town, leaving Bernerotte at the forge.

The regiment of Royal Liégeois, always and universally unpopular, was ordered back

to Metz just then. It was said that General de Bouillé wished to have all the regiments which were devoted to Louis XVI. under his hand, and some time after we heard why.

The Royal Liégeois went away in March, and was replaced by Auvergne, a regiment of true patriots. It had distinguished itself in the American war, and had not wished to march against Nancy. Elof Collin praised it highly at the club: he recapitulated its battles, and we all fraternised, the very first day, with the officers and men, as we had done with those of La Fère.

But the Auvergne regiment had also some old accounts to settle. The noble officers were still in the habit of beating their men, and very soon an extraordinary thing occurred, which ought to have given the aristocrats something to reflect upon.

One day in the beginning of April I was busy putting up my screen, when, at about one o'clock, I heard the roll of drums in the direction of the Town Hall. I went to see what was happening, and as I passed out of

the church door I saw the Auvergne regiment, headed by the subalterns, debouch upon the Place d'Armes, and draw up in square, under the old oaks.

The noble officers were in the café de la Regence, at the corner of the Rue de l'Ancienne Citerne, where Hoffmann's distillery is now, quietly drinking coffee and playing cards. They came out in confusion at the sound of the drum, without taking time to put on their cocked hats.

The colonel approached the men, asking indignantly what this meant? But the drummers continued to beat the drums without taking any notice of him, and three old sub-officers stepped out of the ranks and took up their position in the centre of the square. They were tall fellows, with grey moustaches, and who did not look very manageable.

The inhabitants of the city were crowded at their windows, and on the Place d'Armes, looking, and wondering what it was all about.

Suddenly the drums ceased to beat, and

one of the old men, drawing a paper from his pocket, called out—

“Sergeant Ravette, step out of the ranks !”

The sergeant advanced, carrying arms.

“Sergeant Ravette, the Auvergne regiment acknowledges you as its colonel !”

The new colonel immediately placed his musket against a tree, and drew his sword, while the drums beat, the colours were lowered, and the whole regiment presented arms.

I never saw anything more terrible ; every one felt that if the officers attempted even to raise their canes, the regiment would fall on them with stocks and bayonets. Happily they perceived that the matter was dangerous and hopeless, and they returned to the café while the proclamation was going on.

After the colonel, they nominated the lieutenant-colonel, the major, the captains, the lieutenants—in short, all the officers, and several sub-officers.

At three o'clock all was done. The square broke, and formed in line, and then the

noble officers came out suddenly to protest, but the new colonel, a little dark man, said, in a dry tone—

“Gentlemen, you have six hours to evacuate the place.”

Then he gave the word of command—

“To the left wheel. Forward! Quick step! march!”

The soldiers re-entered their barracks.

The next day not one of the former officers remained in the town. I saw that incident myself.

Three weeks later, on the 24th of April, the National Assembly received a letter from the Minister of War, informing it that the Auvergne regiment, “which had turned out its officers, had constituted itself a private society, and no longer recognised any authority but its own.”

I read this, together with many other lies, in the newspapers of the time. The truth is, that the men of the Auvergne regiment held with the nation, that they were tired of the insolence of the noble officers, and that they would no longer submit to be commanded by



men who might betray them on the field of battle.

Notwithstanding the minister's letter, many other regiments did the same thing, and if our entire army had followed the example of the Auvergne regiment, we should not in later days have seen generals trying to lead their men against the representatives of the people, and whole staffs passing over to the enemy.

A few days afterwards, one Sunday, Maitre Jean came back. He looked into everything, and was quite satisfied. He brought a parcel of papers from the hotel of the Grand Cerf at Lixheim, and from them we learned that Mirabeau had died recently, and that the king, the queen, the court, and everybody regretted him ; that he was praised by all, and that the National Assembly had decreed as follows :—

“ The new edifice of Sainte G  n  vi  ve shall be destined to receive the ashes of great men. The Legislative Body only shall decide to whom that honour shall be rendered. Honor  

Riquetti Mirabeau is judged worthy of that honour."

After what Chauvel had written to us about Mirabeau, this decree surprised us.

The same newspapers related that Louis XVI. wished very decidedly to try the air of his palace at Saint Cloud—that the citizen guard and the people opposed his departure, and that he had gone to the National Assembly to complain that they did not place confidence in him.

He was right. The people must have been utterly wanting in good sense, and good feeling, if they had placed confidence in him! His palace was always filled with nobles and refractory priests, but not a patriot was seen there; his journalists declaimed against the insubordination of the troops, against the National Assembly, and against the people. The royalist newspapers sounded the praise of innumerable bad books, which were published under the name of Camille Desmoulins, Marat, and Père Duchêne, that they might be circulated more quickly—in short, the king and his surroundings represented nothing

but baseness, cowardice, lies, and calumny. True, no one placed any confidence in him ; but that was his fault, not ours. In order to obtain the confidence of the people, loyalty and candour are necessary : he allowed himself to be represented to us by cheats and rascals, and contempt took the place of confidence, which was but just.

Maitre Jean, having found that all was going on well at Baraques, returned to his farm next day.

A few days later, the Pope, Pius VI., launched an excommunication against the bishops and priests who had taken the oath. This did not do them either good or harm, but it made the others more insolent. They raised the island of Corsica, they attacked the patriots in the Avignon district, they broke the windows of the clubs in Paris. The people answered them by burning the Pope's bull at the Palais Royal, by transferring the remains of Voltaire to Sainte G  n  vi  ve, by ordering the church bells to be melted down into copper coin, by summoning the Prince de

Condé to return to France, on pain of forfeiting all his rights as a Frenchman, &c., &c.

But, far from keeping quiet, the Catholic Apostolic citizens redoubled their excesses ; at Brie Comte, the Hainault hussars dragged the patriots, even the women, from their beds, tied them up, and insulted them horribly.

The fury of the nation increased, and the idea of being forced to take arms against these wretches made us all the more angry. In the month of May everything was in flower at Baraques, the trees, the hedges, and the woods ; Marguerite's pear-tree showed behind the house like a heap of snow. We said to ourselves—

“ What happiness it would be if we could only be quiet. Is it not bad enough for the poor to have to suffer from cold and hunger in the bad years ? Must we be threatened now that a good year has come with seeing the Austrians and the Prussians come to ravage our harvests, and traitors combining with them to deliver us into their hands ? ”

In spite of all this, we were working away,

when one fine morning the news came that His Majesty had run away, and that the roads were covered with the national guards of Champagne and Messier in pursuit of him, and that whosoever should lay his hand on him would be a made man.

The news was brought to us by three Alsatians and their wives, who were returning in a carriage from Sarrebourg. The women were crying—

“Jesus! Mary! Joseph! We are all lost!”

The men were sitting in front of the carriage, and taking it by turns to flog the horses. I called out to them—

“What is the matter?”

The one who held the reins looked over his shoulder, and answered—

“The devil is let loose!”

He laughed, being half drunk; but one of the women said—

“The king has run away!”

A few minutes after, more than fifty people, who were returning from market in the town, and were running as fast as they

could to their villages, repeated the same news. Three or four, who stopped at the inn, said that the queen and the dauphin were with the king.

Then, for the first time, I felt angry with this man, because, in spite of all, I had placed confidence in his oath, in consequence of his great piety. Simon Bernerotte was astonished, for I was trembling from head to foot, and I flung my hammer against the wall, and cried—

“ Ah, the coward, he has deceived us ! ”

But presently I grew calm again, and, a great number of men and women having collected in front of the “ Three Pigeons,” to discuss the news, I told them that if the king had gone away, it could only be to join our enemies at Coblentz, and that the Germans had only been waiting for him, to invade us, that William and Leopold had not dared to attack us previously, for fear of what might happen at the Tuileries, but that there was nothing to restrain them now.

If Maitre Jean had been at Baraques, he

would have had the *rappel* beaten, but he, Létumier, and the other sub-officers of our company, were away at their farms. I was in despair at this at the time. I laugh at myself now, when I think of it, for thousands of patriots were guarding the Strasbourg road, and it was not that which Louis XVI. was to take, the road by Belgium or Metz was much shorter. But these are the ideas of youth.

## CHAPTER VI.

EVERYBODY was agreed that the king had gone to join our enemies, and that now the invasion was really coming. So completely was this the mind of the nation, that the National Assembly did not entertain any doubt on the point, and the following morning, 25th June, we found the subjoined decree posted everywhere, on the doors of the churches and public offices, and even in the interior of the taverns, against a wall, so that all the patriots might be ready at call. Maitre Jean came from Pickelholtz expressly to post it up at the "Three Pigeons," and he exclaimed against the king, calling him a caitiff!

"21st June, 1792.

"The National Assembly decrees:

"*Art.* 1. The National Guard throughout

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the entire kingdom shall be prepared for action.

- “ *Art.* 2. The departments of the Nord, the Pas de Calais, the Jura, the Haut Rhin, and Bas Rhin, and all the departments situated on the frontiers of Germany, shall furnish as considerable a number of men as their situation will permit.
- “ *Art.* 3. The other departments shall each furnish from two to three thousand men.
- “ *Art.* 4. Therefore, every citizen desirous of bearing arms shall inscribe himself in his municipality.
- “ *Art.* 5. The registered National Guards shall form themselves into battalions of ten companies. Each company to consist of fifty men.
- “ *Art.* 6. The companies shall be commanded by a sub-lieutenant, a lieutenant, and a captain.
- “ *Art.* 7. The battalions shall be commanded by two lieutenant-colonels and a colonel.

- “ *Art.* 8. The companies shall appoint their officers, and the battalions their staff.
- “ *Art.* 9. Each national guard shall receive fifteen *sous* a day. The sub-lieutenant shall have three times, the lieutenant four times, the captain five times, the lieutenant-colonel six times, and the colonel seven times that amount.
- “ *Art.* 10. When their services shall be no longer necessary, the national guards shall cease to receive pay, and will return, without any distinction, to their former companies.
- “ *Art.* 11. A rule for the troops shall be compiled immediately.”

I have copied this decree for you because it is the first sample of the levies *en masse*—because this is the decree which produced all the great generals of the Republic, those who during many years beat the generals of Frederic, of Francis, of Paul, of William, of Alexander, not ten times, nor twenty

times, but an extraordinary number of times ; and yet they were the sons of peasants ! The others were of noble race, “ the descendants of our proud conquerors,” and our republicans were “ the humble posterity of the conquered.” How everything changes in this world !

This decree shows likewise what confidence the National Assembly had in our king, since it is not against our enemies that it calls upon the nation to rise, but against Louis XVI., who was running away to unite with them. He believed himself certain to catch us again in his nets, but, thank God, things turned out very differently from his expectations. Thus we are taught that the Supreme Being is on the side of the people and the constitutional priests, and not on that of the court, and the bishops, since,—in spite of all their tricks, all their precautions, in spite of the treason of Bouillé, and many others, who went over to the enemy on the failure of their attempt,—the patriot Drouet, the son of a post-master, overthrew those vile projects, and forced the king to return

to Paris. He was arrested by the municipal council of Varennes, a little village nine leagues from the frontier, and the hussars whom Bouillé had sent to escort his carriage were stopped by a cart full of furniture which Drouet and his friends had overturned on a small bridge.

Yes, the will of God was made manifest in these things, which I read, with much emotion, in the newspapers of the time.

Maitre Jean made me get up on one of the tables in the eating-room, which was so full that we could hardly breathe. The windows were open, and the street in front was full of heads, eagerly turned towards me, as I read the news aloud, in the midst of general astonishment, and loud cries of "Long live the Nation!" which were caught up and continued even as far as the village.

Intense indignation was excited by the letter which Bouillé had the insolence to write to the National Assembly at the moment when the king was re-entering Paris in perfect safety, and in which this man tried

to frighten us by threats of invasion. I will not copy the whole letter, but only that part which puts his treason in its proper light.

“Luxembourg, 26th June, 1791.—The king has just made an effort to break his chains, but a blind destiny, to which empires are subjected, has decided against him.”

Thus he began. What does he mean by “a blind destiny to which empires are subjected?” It can only mean that there is no God, which shows us that these nobles were no more than heathens, and that they treated us, who were Christians, like slaves, because they did not believe in our Lord’s words, “You are brethren. You are equals. Love one another.”

But I am not going to stop here; now I am coming to his threats. After stating that the king had gone away in obedience to his counsel, and with the intention of proceeding to Montmédy, there, in the midst of his faithful Germans, to declare the National Assembly dissolved, and to nominate another according to his taste, which should restore

the privileges of the nobility ;—he concluded as follows :

“ Believe me, all the princes of the universe recognise that they are menaced by the monster to which you have given birth, and they will speedily descend upon your unhappy country. I know your strength. Every kind of hope which you may entertain is chimerical, and your speedy chastisement will serve as a memorable example to posterity. I am bound to address you thus, because, above all, your conduct inspires me with pity. You are answerable for the lives of the king and queen to all the kings of the universe, and if a hair of their heads be injured there shall not remain one stone of Paris standing upon another. I know the roads, and I will lead the foreign armies. This letter is only the forerunner of the manifesto of all the sovereigns of Europe. They will warn you in a more distinct manner of the war which you have to dread. Adieu, gentlemen.”

That was pretty plain speaking. We were answerable for the life of the king and queen

to all the kings in the universe, and he, Bouillé, knew our strength, and was to lead the enemy against us in his own country, and utterly destroy Paris !

When I read this letter to my father in the evening, he clasped his hands above his head and exclaimed :

“ Oh, my God ! my God ! can it be possible that such wretches exist in the world ? If Nicholas, who also knows the country, were to bring the enemy to Baraques, I should die of grief.”

“ Yes, father,” I replied, “ but then you are not a noble. You are not a descendant of the conquerors ; you are not a general appointed by the king, and you have not received a large pension, honours and power. You are a poor peasant ; you have always suffered. The country has never given you a farthing. You owe it only the light of day, and that suffices to make you love it. The bare idea of treason to it makes you shudder. But as for these nobles, their country does not exist for them apart from wealth and honours ; their country is one in which there

are serfs who labour and kings who heap benefits on the nobles. If they were obliged as we are, to dig, to forge, to work from morning until night to support their king in opulence, they would very soon cease to be royalists."

This is what I said to my father, and the truth of it was very soon made manifest. Louis XVI. returned to the Tuilleries, but he was no longer master there. He could no longer confer wealth and privileges, and his officers began to desert him.

We soon heard that all the officers of the Colonel Général regiment, then in garrison at Dunkirk, had passed over in one night to the Austrians, and that those at Lille had attempted to deliver up the place to the enemy, and would have succeeded, but for the patriotism of the soldiers and the inhabitants.

The disquiet was universal. We were all afraid we should wake one fine morning and find Condé, William, Leopold, and a hundred thousand ruffians at our gates. All France held Louis XVI. unworthy to reign; all



France said that he had betrayed his oath, and conspired against the country; that he was our most dangerous enemy, since the forces which he received from us for our defence were those by whose aid he contemplated our betrayal.

The country could not live with this horrible wound in it; that was evident to all sensible men.

## CHAPTER VII.

WE learned from the Parisian newspapers that the people of Paris were of one mind with us in this matter. But who was to be put in Louis's place ?

One party said he must be deposed, and the Dauphin placed on the throne, with a regent, according to the Constitution. Another that some one must be charged with the execution of the laws ; others demanded the Republic. But at the Jacobin club Robespierre denounced the idea of a Republic. He said the name had nothing to do with the matter ; the country might be free and happy with a monarch, enslaved and miserable under certain kinds of republicanism. Danton desired only the deposition of Louis XVI., and a Council of interdiction. Pétion

thought with Robespierre, but Brissot, Condorcet, and the Duc d'Orleans, leaned to the Republic.

I think, however, that if at that time any one had had the power of making the Duc d'Orleans king instead of Louis, he would have sacrificed himself to his country. Only he must have shown that he could be the strongest, for he was too prudent a man not to understand the danger of filling such a position with men of the stamp of Marat, Camille Desmoulins, and Fréron against him. Nobody thought of this measure. People had not yet learned revolution by experience, and they still fancied it a serious affair to make kings, republics, or empires; but since then they have learned that the real difficulty consists not in making, but in keeping them.

These debates lasted three weeks, and the National Assembly did not decide on anything. A great number of its members—the bishops and the nobles, whom they called the Party of the Right,—had protested against the outrages offered to the monarch and his

august family, declaring that they would continue to be present at the sittings of the Assembly, but without taking any part in its actions, or acknowledging the legality of its decrees.

It seemed that the other members were afraid. Barnave, Lameth, and Duport, who were called "the Feuillants," and who visited his Majesty in secret, were continually talking without proposing anything distinct, and so matters dragged along.

At last the people lost patience, and sent a petition to the National Assembly, praying the deposition of the King. The National Assembly set it aside. The enraged people assembled at the Champ de Mars, and signed a still more urgent petition, on the Altar of the Country.

But M. Bailly, the mayor of Paris, had the bearers of the document delayed upon their way, so that they did not arrive until after the National Assembly had decided that the King could not be tried because his person was sacred, which simply amounted to saying that he might summon the Prussians and the

Austrians into France, and hand us over to them at his pleasure, without incurring any risk.

Then the people recognised that almost the whole National Assembly, with the exception of such men as Robespierre, the Abbé Grégoire, Chauvel, &c., was corrupt, and their fury rose.

The storm raged at the clubs. At the Cordeliers Danton said that a supplement to the Revolution had become necessary, and the patriots agreed to meet at the Champ de Mars to draw up a fresh petition, which should bear the signatures of thousands of Frenchmen.

The National Assembly did not wish this. It felt that such a petition would force its hand. Lafayette and Bailly received orders to resort to martial law—that terrible law, which permits the soldiers to fire upon the people after they have been three times summoned to disperse — and they assembled masses of troops.

Early the next day the people, who were beginning to assemble, discovered two spies,

hidden under the altar of the country, in order to divulge to the court all that should occur. They cut their heads off, and paraded the heads, stuck on the ends of two long pikes, all through Paris.

At two o'clock Bailly and Lafayette arrived at the Champ de Mars, and applied martial law—some say after due warning, others say they gave no warning. But whether or no, it came to the same thing. Many wretched unarmed beings, men, women, and children, were killed. The nobles, the bishops, the court, and the emigrés, must have been content that day, at least.

It was by order of the National Assembly that the people were fired on for the first time—that the great misfortune of strife between the citizens and the people had its rise. No greater could have befallen us, and we are suffering from it still, and to it we owe military government and despotism.

Camille Desmoulins, Danton, and Fiéron were pursued, by order of Bailly and Lafayette, but they escaped. They came back, however, and Marat came back, and the rela-

tives of those who had been killed came back ! So that civil war, war between men of the same family, was the first result which accrued to us from the flight of Louis XVI. ; the rest was to come afterwards.

This National Assembly, after having done such great things, made such just laws, proclaimed the rights of man and of citizenship, and preserved its greatness in the midst of such terrible trials, came to this by adherence to the idea of divine right ! An idea contrary to good sense, to justice, and to the Constitution which it had just constructed.

When we think of such things, we are obliged to acknowledge the infirmity of the minds of men, and *the danger of large civil lists*. Happily this corrupt, venal, and worn-out Assembly had not long to last ; the Constitution was almost completed, and the new elections were drawing near.

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN our country, the joy of the former provosts, justiciaries, aldermen, and lieutenant of police, on learning the misfortune which had occurred at the Champ de Mars, was extreme. The satisfaction which they felt was to be seen in their faces ; they took no pains to hide it.

Raphael Manque, a respectable citizen of Phalsbourg, the president of our club, delivered a melancholy speech on the occasion. He explained it all by saying that Marat, Fréron, Desmoulins, and other mischievous journalists had done all the mischief by denouncing everybody — by representing Lafayette, the friend of Washington, to be a traitor, and Bailly, the president of the States General at the Tennis Court, as a fool. He



said that these journalists irritated and excited the people until they lost their heads, and then it only needed a moment's angry collision to bring about terrible calamities.

This was his notion ; but the delight of our enemies proved to us that the matter was of much graver importance, and had a far different origin.

Now began the primary assemblies for the nomination of deputies to the Legislative Council ; the list of *active* citizens was posted up, and we *passive* citizens, who did not pay direct taxes to the value of three days' work, had no right to vote—just as in '89—though we paid twenty times more in *indirect taxes* on wine, tobacco, brandy, beer, &c. We were really far more active citizens by our labour and our expenditure, than the misers who funded all their savings. Why was this difference made ? Even Maître Jean said—

“ This is wrong. Our deputies are making blunders. Many of the patriots, and the best among them, will demand equality in the end.”

The elections took place, and rich men,

who paid at least a hundred and fifty livres of direct taxes, were nominated. Money did everything now ; good sense, education, courage, honesty, were only accounted second-rate qualifications, and might even be entirely dispensed with.

Some time after, during the reaping, Chauvel wrote us word that the Constitution was completed, that the King had accepted it, and that he and Marguerite were about to return to Phalsbourg by the coach from the Rue Coq-Heron.

Eight days afterwards, Maître Jean and I were waiting for them, early in the morning, at the Bœuf Rouge, and when the coach came up, all white with dust, we embraced Marguerite and Chauvel with joy which I cannot attempt to describe, but which I dare say you can imagine.

Marguerite had grown tall ! She was quite a woman now—a beautiful brunette, with bright eyes, and a sprightly air. Ah ! she was a true daughter of Chauvel's, and when she jumped out of the coach, crying " Michel ! " I hardly dared to touch her with my coarse

blacksmith's hands, and to kiss her cheeks, I was so confused by my excessive admiration.

Chauvel was not in the least changed ; one might have thought he had just come from a tramp in Alsace or Lorraine, to sell his little books. He laughed, and said—

“ Well, Maitre Jean, here we are ! Everything has gone right. Michel, I am pleased with you—I liked your letters.”

What happiness it was to see them again ! What happiness to return to Baraques, walking beside Marguerite, and carrying her basket, and then to help her to unpack all the presents she had brought us from Paris, in the eating-room at the Three Pigeons. There was a fine cap, with a cockade, for Dame Catherine, a needle-case, full of good steel needles, for Nicole—instead of the wooden needles she had formerly used — and for Michel's watch there were two beautiful red breloques, of the newest fashion, which I keep now in my secretary, as if they were golden coin. There they are in a box—they are old, they are yellow, they did not cost much when

they were new, for Marguerite had too much sense to buy anything expensive for me—she knew the least thing given by her would be of value to me.

Well! faded and worn as they are, it would need a strong man to take them from me to-day; I would defend them like an old savage—they were Marguerite's first gift! She was eighteen, I was twenty-one, and we loved each other! Could I say more than that?

But there is one thing which I must tell you in detail: it is Chauvel's speech, which he delivered at the club on the evening of the following day. He was very much fatigued; he had been shut up for six days in the coach, and Maître Jean said—

“Chauvel, you must not think of such a thing! You will not be able to do it. You can very well put it off until the day after, or even longer.”

But the indomitable little man would not wait. He insisted on giving an account of his mandate at once. A number of people came in from the neighbouring villages to hear

him. I have preserved his speech ; I knew at the time that it was worth keeping, and that I should be glad to have it at a later period :—

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ The Constitution which you charged us to establish, is completed. The King accepts, and swears to observe it. This Constitution, then, is to govern us all ; it has become the first law of the country. I have done all in my power to render it good ; I have maintained your interests with all my strength ; and now I have come to give you an account of my votes at the National Assembly, as it is my duty to do, for I have never forgotten that I am responsible to you for the mandate which you have confided to me.

“ Without responsibility, no honest work can be accomplished. Whoever entrusts us with his business has a right to demand an account from us. I have come to render mine. If you are satisfied, you will give me your esteem ; if I have deceived you, you owe me nothing but contempt.”

Then loud shouts were raised of "Long live our deputy Chauvel! long live our representative!" but they seemed to annoy him—he compressed his lips and extended his hand, as if to say, "Enough, enough!" and when silence was re-established, he continued—

"My friends, you would do well to distrust the unreflecting enthusiasm which would prevent your making a difference between an honest man and a rogue. If you applaud every one without reflecting, what good does it do me to have fulfilled my duty? You would do the same for the first schemer who should present himself."

But, instead of listening to him, they redoubled their applause, and he had to wait, shrugging his shoulders, until they left off.

"Now," said he, "you are content. You have approved of my conduct without knowing anything about it. What will you say, by and bye, if you are not satisfied?"

He continued—

"When I left you, on the 10th April, 1789, France was divided into three orders;

the Nobility, the Clergy, and the People, or Third Estate. The two first had all the property, all the privileges, and all the honours ; and you, the third order, a hundred times more numerous than the other two put together, had all the burdens and all the suffering.

“ Each of you remember what he endured in those days—the taxes which crushed him, the imposition which he was forced to bear, the horrible famine which spread dismay and desolation around every two or three years. It was the shame and the ruin of the country. You know it all—I need say no more about it.

“ Well, I am now about to show you what the National Assembly has substituted for this—the advantages which we have gained, and also such defects in the Constitution as, much against our will, we have been forced to submit to.

“ I cannot speak to you in detail of the two thousand five hundred laws or decrees, which we have voted in twenty-eight months, but I can give you their principal points.

In the first place, the 'orders' are abolished, according to the first article of the Constitution. 'Men are born and remain free, and equal in all their rights.' The National Assembly, desirous of establishing the French Constitution on the rights of man, abolishes, irrevocably, those institutions which injure the equality of rights. There exist no longer nobility, hereditary distinctions, or orders, feudal rule, patrimonial justice, any kind of title, order of chivalry, corporation, or decoration for which titles of nobility were required; nor any superiority other than that of public functionaries, in the exercise of their functions. All corporations of professions, arts, and trades, are abolished.

"The law no longer recognises religious vows, or any other engagement, which is contrary to natural rights. It declares that all citizens are admissible to public offices and employments, without any other distinction than those of virtue and talents; that all contributions shall be imposed equally on all citizens, in proportion to their means; that similar offences shall be punished by



similar penalties, without distinction of persons.'

"For all this I have voted, because, in my eyes, equality and justice are one and the same thing. This is the first point, and upon it you see that you have nothing to fear.

"The second point is liberty. All rights cohere, they support themselves by each other. If the citizens have not liberty to speak, to write, to print, and to disseminate their ideas, what good will it do them to have rights, since they could not complain openly, and force the violators of these rights to respect them, and even to repair such injuries as they had received, by the justice of their demands, addressed to the ears of the whole nation! The law would be only a dead letter; the strongest would be always in the right, he might rob and murder you in a corner with impunity, by simply stopping your mouth. Thus the Constitution guarantees liberty to speak, to write, to print his thoughts, and to disseminate them by any means he chooses, to every individual, as his natural and civil right.

“After that come the other liberties—of freedom to come and go, to remain, to depart, without being arrested, accused, or detained, except in the cases determined by the law, and according to the forms which it prescribes; freedom to exercise any religious worship which suits you, liberty to address individual petitions to the constituted authorities, to assemble in order to discuss the affairs of the nation—in short, liberty to do everything which does not interfere with the rights of others or endanger public security.

“I have voted for all this, without exception; for if equality is justice, liberty is the guarantee of justice—the one cannot exist without the other.

“The third point is fraternity. The Constitution declares that there shall be created and organized a general establishment for public succour, for the relief of the infirm poor, or of the poor, not infirm, who are out of work. They shall no longer be obliged to have recourse to alms,—for mendicity is a degradation to man, it makes him lose the sense of his dignity, and debases him by

making him bow down before his fellow ;—the Constitution will have no more of it—it derogates from the greatness of the nation. The Constitution declares, therefore, that beneficence is no longer an individual virtue, but a social duty.

“ But, from the point of view of charity, or, as it is better expressed, of the solidarity of men united in society, the greatest work of all has been done. I speak of public instruction, for Christ, who is the model for all of us, has said, ‘ Man does not live by bread alone, but by the spirit ! ’ The Constitution,—understanding that fine saying,—declares that there shall be erected and established a system of public instruction common to all citizens, gratuitous in so far as those branches of instruction which are indispensable to all who are concerned, such as reading, writing, and the elements of arithmetic ; and whose establishment shall be distributed in proportion to, and in combination with the divisions of the kingdom.

“ Thus, gentlemen, you see that the first part of the Constitution is comprised in three

words—Equality, Liberty, Fraternity. That is the right of *persons*. It remained to complete the rights of our country over *things*. You have not forgotten that before '89, as there existed separate orders of persons, so there were orders of goods, properties of all sorts ; appanages, fiefs, simple fiefs, great fiefs, communal benefices, and so on. The more poor and miserable you were, the more heavily laden with taxes your bit of land was. The richer you were, the less you had to pay. The Constitution abolishes all those distinctions ; the taxes shall be equally distributed, and all property shall be inviolable by the same title.

“Further, the Constitution attributes the property hitherto destined to public services, such as the glacis of fortified places, the streets, the public promenades, and monuments, to the Nation, and not to the King. It places at the disposition of the Nation, in order that they may be sold and its debts paid, the priories, the abbeys, the convents, and all goods of every kind formerly belonging to them.

“Now everything is in order, and one of our last decrees directs the formation of a code of civil laws to regulate the relations of persons and property throughout the kingdom. This civil code will complete our work, by effacing the last traces of the Roman right and the local customs, which vary in the different provinces, and cause constant confusion among us.

“I will not speak to you to-day of the new division of the kingdom, of the holding of primary and electoral assemblies, of the meeting of the representatives in legislative assembly, of the monarchy, the regency, and the ministers ; the relations of the legislative body with the King ; the exercise of the executive power and the exterior relations of France, though all these are regulated in detail by the Constitution. But that which interests us particularly, not once, not every year or two years, but in every hour of our lives, is money. Therefore, throughout the entire duration of the National Assembly, I was always anxious about your money and my own,—anxious to know what should

become of it, who should demand it of us, who should collect it, who should have it in his keeping, and how it should be expended. I formed one of every commission on this point, and I knew that you would be glad I should do so, because we do not want to work for idlers ; we do not want them to eat what we have toiled for. No, that is what revolts and disgusts us !”

At this, notwithstanding Chauvel’s prohibition, the whole assembly broke out into applause, and even he could not keep down a smile, for he had touched the right chord, the sensitive chord of the peasants’ heart.

Maître Jean laughed gleefully, and said :

“ Ah, how right he is, and how well he knows us all !”

At last the tumult was hushed, and Chauvel continued :

“ Formerly the whole country was under the guidance of our sovereign lord, the King, our supreme master, and the irresponsible head of the State. Our lands and our provinces were his. Any sums of money he

wished for, the Provincial Assembly voted. They made wry faces sometimes, it is true, but they voted the money all the same. The parish councils, with their syndics, apportioned the share to be paid by every peasant's inheritance. The poor people paid, and his Majesty had not to give any account of the money.

“Well, the Constitution has now declared that the public contributions shall be debated and fixed each year by the legislative body, and that they shall not remain in force beyond the last day of the ensuing Session. You see, then, that for the future you will fix the amount of the contributions which you will have to pay, since the persons charged to consent to them will be appointed by you. If you send peasants, you may be sure that they will not readily consent to burthen themselves and you for the benefit of the courtiers. If you send others, that is your affair. There are honest men in every condition of life, but you ought to know them well before you send them to represent your interests.

“The legislative body having to be renewed every three years, the taxes cannot subsist after that period, and if they have not been voted anew, no one has the right to ask for a farthing. This is the backbone of our new Constitution : from the moment that the Legislative Body refuses the taxes everything comes to a standstill ; the King must yield.

“Besides, in order that you, the taxpayers, may see plainly whether your deputies are faithful,—whether they are not too ready to give your money, detailed accounts of the expenditure are to be printed and published at the commencement of each legislature. The same is to apply to the receipts of contributions, and every department of public revenue. Thus every citizen who wishes to be acquainted with his own affairs will only have to read the Gazette once a year ; when he will see whether his deputy has defended the interests of the taxpayers,—whether he has voted with his eyes shut, or whether he has not been sufficiently careful on such and



such a point. Then, if he be not a fool, the citizen will know what he ought to do.

“I believe that it would be impossible to organize a better system of control. It remains to be seen whether you will be content with the expenses, for the Constitution declares that under no pretext whatever shall the funds necessary to the payment of the National Debt and the Civil List be refused or suspended. As regards the National Debt, nothing can be more just, and I voted, Yes. A great nation like France must not allow itself to be made bankrupt, and the lenders ought to be convinced that nowhere in the world could their money be better placed. Each of us would answer for it to his last farthing, and we should be indignant if our representatives brought us to bankruptcy, that is quite clear.

“But, as to the Civil List, why should it pass before all the services of the State? Ought not our judges, our magistrates, our administrators, our soldiers, to be as sure of their pay as the King? Why should the King receive his salary before those on whom

the existence of the nation depends? I can see no reason. I voted against this clause, which I regard as a defect in the Constitution; but it is only a slight defect, and we will not dwell upon it.

“The Constitution reserves to the National Assembly the right of fixing, at the end of each reign, the amount of the Civil List for the ensuing reign. This is a great remedy, and we ought not to doubt that our representatives will make use of it when, by-and-bye, the old custom of keeping up a crowd of lackeys, valets, and courtiers shall have gone out of fashion at court, and it shall have come to be understood how wicked it is to impoverish those who labour, in order to keep in luxury and idleness, people who are good for nothing but to disgrace the human species.

“Yes, this will come, with the progress of good sense and justice; but, in the meantime, I think, considering all the steps that have been gained, the people would be wrong to complain. Our conquests are immense; we have won what our unhappy forefathers have

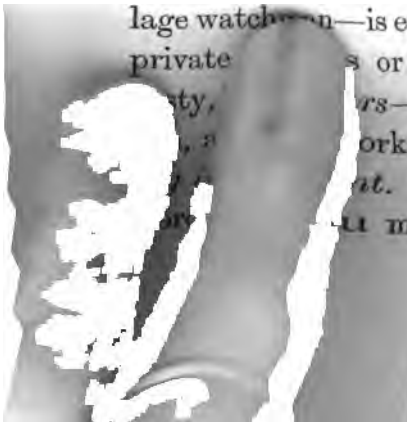
vainly asked with outstretched hands from heaven for centuries ; our rights are firmly established, and we have arms to defend them. Instead of being poor animals, crushed down to the earth, we have become men !

“ And now that we have the upper-hand, in spite of the protests, the abuse, and the calumnies of the race who lived at our expense—in spite of their devices to create opposition and strife among us ; now that these honest people are going away by thousands, to raise heaven and earth against us, in Germany, in England, in Russia,—while the others who remain in France abuse the protection of the laws, and of a religion of charity and fraternity, by exerting the ignorant populations of the South and West against the Constitution ; now that these excellent Frenchmen are preparing civil war and invasion at the same time—in order to recover their privileges at any price !—let us, my friends, hold firmly together. Let us put aside our divisions ; let there never be a question between us about active citizens, that is the only

which our enemies have contrived to pass through the National Assembly, the sole great defect of our Constitution ; but it will disappear. The citizens will soon understand that if they stood alone, they would be crushed by the clergy and the aristocracy, and that, if they would gather and preserve the fruits of our common victory, they must ally themselves absolutely with the people, and efface with their own hands the unjust distinction between active and passive citizens.

“ And now a last word.

“ We have won, let us try to preserve what we have gained ; and that we may do so, my friends, let each of us fix this fact firmly in his mind—that he is *sovereign*—you understand me, *sovereign* ! Every functionary, from the greatest to the least—from the king to the village watchman—is established, not for his own private interest, nor for the interests of a dynasty, but for us who have appointed him, and for the work to pay him. *He whom I appoint.* You must understand this the



minds of your children, for this it is which will make the strength and the greatness of our country. And then let us agree that each of us will be for all, and all for each. Let us never permit the rights of a fellow-citizen to be violated ; if he complains—if he protests—let us fly to defend him as we would fly to extinguish a fire ; and if any aristocratic functionary tries to violate our rights, let us protest, and call our fellow-citizens to our aid.

“ I tell you plainly, that he who allows the law to be violated in his person is a coward ; he deserves to be trodden under foot, and reduced again to serfdom, and he who does not go to the aid of an oppressed citizen is a traitor to the nation. We have suffered enough from arbitrary injustice for centuries ; it is time to establish security among us, to take the Constitution for a basis, and to regard any one who violates it as our most dangerous enemy. Thus we shall be happy, and if all Europe should march against us to threaten us, we can look them calmly in the face.

“ A great people, who defend their rights, founded on justice and good sense, are invincible, they can defy the universe.”

After this speech of Chauvel's, which all the old men in our country have proudly cherished in their memory, you may imagine how enthusiastic the patriots became. Our president, Raphael, thanked him publicly ; he was elected a member of the club by acclamation, and then we set out on our return to Baraques, at ten o'clock, when curfew was ringing at the two barracks.

## CHAPTER IX.

IN the month of October, 1791, at the commencement of the Legislative Assembly, Chauvel showed us what an excellent man of business he was. In less than three weeks he had sold his house at Baraques to Létumier, who married his daughter to a young man from Mittelbronn. He had hired a ground-floor, opposite the market-place, from old Baruch Aron, at Phalsbourg; he had fitted up shelves in the interior for his newspapers, his books, and his pamphlets; he was receiving great bales, which Marguerite unpacked, and then arranged their contents in order in their shop. His two carriers, Marc Divés and Toubac, were tramping with their packs through Alsace and Lorraine; every-

thing was going on well, and such a trade had never before been seen in the country.

It was through Chauvel that we got the fashion of small tricoloured handkerchiefs, with the rights of man printed in the middle. All the patriot women wore them. Then the others had handkerchiefs with verses of the Apocalypse printed on them, and on the border the following :—

“If the purchasers are not content, their money should be returned, when the nation paid off its assignats.”

Chauvel sold everything—the monks’ little books, as well as the political catechisms ; newspapers written by the *émigrés* as well as the *Ami du peuple*, and Maître Jean having told him one day that he was doing wrong, he answered, cunningly—

“Let me alone, Maître Jean ; our princes, our nobles, and our bishops—our abbés and our devotees—are doing us a great service by publishing their ideas ; they enlighten the people, they are doing our work better than we could do it ourselves.”

At the same time, in order to give the



patriots the means of learning the latest news cheaply, he established a sort of schoolhouse beside his shop in the Rue du Cœur Rouge. There was a large table in the centre, and benches set round it. The table was covered with the morning's papers, and any one might go in there, sit down and read his paper for as long as he liked, on payment of one sou.

This admirable invention had existed for a long time in Paris, but it required a sensible man like Chauvel to enable our little town and its environs to profit by it.

All his other business did not prevent his attending punctually to the business of our club. He had been appointed president in the place of Raphael Manque, and we met three times a week, after seven o'clock in the evening.

Chauvel would arrive, seat himself in the president's chair, place his snuff-box and handkerchief on his right, take a large pinch, and say in a loud voice :

"Gentlemen, the session has begun."

Then he would unfold the *Moniteur*, and read the discussions in the Legislative As-

sembly, and sometimes those which took place at the *Jacobins*, in the *Journal des Débats*. He explained things which many of us would not otherwise have understood: and then, having read all the news, he would say—

“There, gentlemen, that is our position. Is there any one who wishes to speak?”

Sometimes one, sometimes another, had something to say. He listened, and replied. Not only the workmen, the citizens, and the municipal officers of the town came to the club, but even Colonel Bazelaire, who had been sent by the National Assembly to replace Sergeant Ravette, who did not sufficiently understand the handling of troops. Each one said his say, and when ten o'clock struck, and the curfew was rung, Chauvel would rise and say good-humouredly :

“Public affairs are settled. Good-bye, until next Monday, or Wednesday, or Saturday.”

I tell you these things, because you ought to know them, but you may suppose far other matters occupied my mind. At this

time I went courting to Marguerite every Sunday, with my three-cornered hat, my boots polished with whites of eggs, and my red *breloques* displayed in all their majesty. Ah, I was no longer the lubberly Michel Bastien, who considered himself quite clean enough if he shaved once a month.

Since Marguerite's return, I had seen that sort of thing would not do, that many others admired her, and looked meaningly at her great brown eyes and beautiful black hair, and that I was not the only one who had found out that she was clever and sensible. No! a great many others shared my ideas on these points; and they were not only workmen and peasants, but young dandies, officers of the Auvergne regiment, *ci-devants* in powdered wigs, who filled the shop with perfume, while they were buying their newspapers, and laughed and chatted that they might win a smile from her. I saw it all very soon, and then, good Heavens! how I washed myself, how I shaved myself! You should have seen me on Sunday mornings, before my little looking-glass, which

hung on the window-shutter, arranging my beard two or three times over. My cheeks shone like a new hatchet, and as I was not yet quite satisfied with my appearance, I passed my hand at least ten times over my chin, to ensure its perfection. Then, after nine o'clock, when my mother had gone off, through the snow, to hear mass said by a refractory priest at Hernidorff, my old father came up the stairs gently, and looked through the little window in the roof, saying :

“Michel, she is off. Would you like me to arrange your pigtail?”

For he always plaited my pigtail for me—a fine specimen, I assure you, black, and as thick as my arm, so that on week days I had to push it under my shirt, to keep it from striking my shoulders while I was forging, and thus hindering my work. Yes, my dear father took pride in my pigtail, and always plaited it slowly and carefully. I can see him now, astride on a chair, his comb in his hand, as happy as a king. He was proud of my broad shoulders, too, and my slight waist, and would say :

"Ah, it is not only because I am your father that I say so, but everyone knows there is not a man in the country so strong as you."

I was always touched at this, and I wished very much to tell him how much I loved him, but I dared not—I respected my father too much. I felt sure that he knew I loved Marguerite, and my mother suspected it, and was preparing for a battle, for which my father and I were also making ready on our side. It would be a terrible affair, but we believed we should win all the same; and we dreamed of happy days to come in that little attic, under the thatch. When I was dressed, and shaved, and my father had given me the last finishing touch with the brush, he would say:

"That's it! You may go now and enjoy yourself, my boy."

He had not enjoyed himself much in his long life of toil, he had not had many happy moments, and now, when my mother left her home to go a long distance to hear mass said by a priest who was violating the

laws of his country, the poor man had to peel the potatoes and prepare the dinner. That is what comes of being too good.

Then I embraced him, and went off with a light heart ; and he looked at me, smilingly, from the door-step, and all the old women looked out of their frost-laden casements to see me pass. I went in to the tavern of the "Three Pigeons," and swallowed my dinner with the utmost celerity, and ran across the little garden at the back, dreading lest I might be detained ; for in the season of the early frosts the carriers wanted their horses roughed sometimes, and I should have had to take off my fine coat, and turn up my shirt-sleeves.

In a quarter of an hour I reach the town, and pass by the corner where Tribolin, the apothecary (dead these sixty years), has his shop ; he nods, but I do not wait to speak to him. Further on, I see Chauvel's shop, with its round door, its roof of wooden planks, and the packets of newspapers and pamphlets spread out on the window-sills. People are going in and out with newspapers in their

hands, patriots, soldiers, *ci-devants* ; and then, when I reach the door, I see Marguerite behind the counter, in a little white cap, lively, alert, talking to every one as she gives each person what he asks for.

"Here it is, sir, the *Revolutions de Paris*, two sous. You want the *Journal de la Cour de la Ville*, sir ? The last numbers have just been sold."

She is in the midst of the excitement of the sale, but when she sees me her face changes, and she says, in a joyful voice—

"Go into the library, Michel, my father is there. I will come presently."

I press her hand as I pass ; she laughs, and says—

"Go along ! I haven't time to talk."

I go into the library, and there I find Chauvel, busily writing up his register. He says to me, without turning his head :

"It's you, is it, Michel ? All right. Sit down, and let me finish these four lines."

While he writes, he asks me all the news about Maître Jean, Dame Catherine, and the

forge. His four lines stretch themselves to many times four. At last I say :

“I must go and look at the papers.”

“Yes, do—I am making out some accounts.”

Then I turn to the left, and go into the large room, where the patriots are reading the newspapers which have arrived this morning. Some of them are writing letters. I pretend to read very attentively, but in reality I am looking through the glass door at Marguerite, going about in the shop, and she sometimes peeps through the glass door herself, and gives me a smile. Occasionally she comes into the room, and, quick as lightning, hands me a newspaper, says, “Read that, Michel, it will please you,” and is gone again.

I passed hours upon hours in that room, but I should be very much puzzled to tell you what I read there.

It made me happy for the whole week just to look at Marguerite thus, and I would not have exchanged this life for a hundred thousand others.



Chauvel, seeing me so well shaven, my pigtail so well plaited, and my clothes so carefully put on, would laugh, and call me a dandy, at which I would blush. Sometimes he would hold out his big snuff-box, and say :

“Take a pinch, citizen Michel.”

But to cover my nose with snuff without any reason ! What would Marguerite say to that ? So I told Chauvel that snuff gave me a headache, and he laughed again, and said I was an aristocrat, and afraid of soiling my fine cravat.

He made fun of me, but he loved me all the time, and he knew quite well that I did not go there every Sunday at one o'clock and stay till seven, that I might talk politics with him and pretend to read. He was much too knowing not to see things clearly, and if he allowed me to sit there and smile at Marguerite, it was because he believed me to be an honest lad ; otherwise he would have turned me out without the slightest hesitation.

He was pleased to see me there, and my

ideas suited him, only, whenever he got an opportunity, he always recommended me to read good books. He lent me all those I wished for out of his library, which contained none but serious works.

As he had sold his house at Baraques, and I could no longer go into it, I read, in the evenings, in our attic, and made my mother very angry about the cost of the oil for my lamp.

It was a constant cause of contention in the house, and if I had not taken care to lock the books up in my box every time I went out, I am sure she would have burned them, as, for many years past, the Capuchins had preached that books were the perdition of souls,—that they resembled the tree of the knowledge of good and evil from which the serpent had plucked Adam's apple, and so driven us all out of paradise, and a great deal more nonsense of the same sort.

The books against which they were most vehement were the Bible and the Gospels, because, if the people read these, they must find out that these fellows did the

very opposite to what the Saviour commanded.

It is easy to imagine, therefore, how profound was the ignorance in which the people lived before '89.

Chauvel never ceased urging them to learn. And he was right. If poverty is a horrible misfortune, the blindness of ignorance is one more horrible still.

## CHAPTER X.

OUR country of Alsace and Lorraine was by no means the most backward in France. I well remember the indignation with which our club listened to Chauvel when he read to us the report sent to the National Assembly by Gersonne, their civil commissioner to the departments of La Vendée and Deux Sévres, to inquire into the religious disturbances. Then we discovered that the ignorance of those districts was more dense than our own, and might even become very dangerous to the nation.

This report stated that the peasants attacked the constitutional priests with sticks by day, and guns by night; that the refractory priests continued the use of their func-

tions, saying mass, and hearing confessions in their own houses, and that the badness of the roads and the simplicity of the poor creatures, reared in the worship of images, rendered their conversion to the rights of man very difficult, indeed almost impossible.

This difficulty had been increased by a circular letter from the Vicar-General Beauregard, which ordered the curés of La Vendée to abstain from saying mass in the parish churches, lest the faithful should be corrupted by schismatical priests. He directed them to assemble their flocks in retired places, under a rock, or in a barn, for the celebration of Mass, when they were to use portable altars, cotton chasubles, and common metal altar furniture ; assuring them that the celebration of the holy mysteries with such poverty and simplicity would make more impression on the people than any splendour, and would recall to their memory the persecutions of the early Christian church, in which there had been so many martyrs.

We were not slow to comprehend the danger of this, and Chauvel, when he had

finished reading the report, explained to us that the refractory priests must have received orders to excite civil war in France, while the *émigrés*, at the head of the Germans, were to attempt to invade us. He told us there could be no doubt that such was the plan of our enemies, and that it behoved us to hold together more and more firmly, if we would resist them.

All the commercial travellers who came back from the other side of the Rhine informed us that at Worms, Coblenz, and Mayence, more than fifteen thousand gentlemen were ready to guide the armies of Leopold and Frederick William, when the time to enter Lorraine should have come. It had become absolutely necessary that we should take measures.

On the 9th November, 1791, the National Assembly decreed that the French assembled on the right bank of the Rhine were suspected of conspiracy, that if they remained in the same attitude until the 1st January, 1792, they should be prosecuted as guilty persons, and punished with death, and that their

revenues should be confiscated for the benefit of the nation.

The King placed his *veto* upon this decree.

Then ensued redoubled disturbances in Bretagne, in Poitou, and in Gevandan. The monks who were sent as missionaries set up calvaries at the cross-roads, and distributed rosaries, medals, and indulgences to the passers-by.

They declared all marriages celebrated by constitutional priests to be null and void, and all sacraments administered by them sacrilegious; they excommunicated the municipal officers who had installed the constitutional priests, and ordered the faithful to abstain from all communication with the latter.

Then wives separated themselves from their husbands, children abandoned their fathers, and the greater number of the peasants in these provinces relinquished their service in the National Guard.

Jean Chouan took to the road in Maine, and Schinderhannes and his band in our country; they began by small acts of

violence, went on to pillage barns and farm-yards, and then at the end of two years became so celebrated, especially Jean Chouan, that the nobles and the clergy recognised in him a firm supporter of the throne and the altar, and he gave his name to the army of La Vendée.

The Legislative Assembly, desirous of putting a stop to these proceedings, decreed, on the 29th November, that the priests who had not taken the oath should be deprived of their pensions, that they should be forbidden to celebrate Mass, even in private houses, and that, if any disturbance on account of religion should arise in their commune, the department should oblige them to go elsewhere.

Again, the King placed his *veto* on this decree. It was evident then that he approved of everything that could injure, and rejected everything that could save us.

Some letters were afterwards found, written by him at this time, to the King of Prussia, in which he entreated him to *hasten*.



We have seen that he had an understanding with our enemies, and did not care about anything but himself, and the privileged orders.

If terrible misfortunes befel him, are we to be reproached for them? Ought we to have allowed ourselves to be pillaged by people who had been doing nothing else for centuries, and who spoke of us as "the race of the conquered?"

The Legislative Assembly, where Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet, Mathieu Dumas, Bazire, Merlin (de Thionville), &c., could not come to an agreement about anything else, agreed that :

"His Majesty, Louis XVI., did not deserve our confidence, and that the Queen, Marie Antoinette, deserved it still less."

The entire nation thought with them. There was serious disquiet everywhere, and, during the winter of '91—'92, which was very severe at the foot of our mountains, the people gathered about their hearths sorrowfully, and said to one another :

"We shall not reap our crops. War will

be upon us, for a certainty, in the spring. This cannot last, it would be better to run the risk of being killed than to endure such an existence, so the sooner it comes the better !”

Ah, the King, the queen, the fine court ladies, the great nobles, and the refractory bishops, who have been pitied and cried up as martyrs for seventy years, ought to have come among us, ought to have gone into the huts of the wood-cutters and sawyers, to find out that they were well off to have millions a year to expend, while so many honest and industrious people had not enough potatoes to live upon.

They ought to have known this, when they tried to grasp everything, as before, without right or reason, to get back all they had so unjustly held, by writing to our enemies, by stirring up civil war in the kingdom, by opposing the decrees which would have re-established order, by endless deceit and lying, by calumniating the patriots, by treating their fellow-creatures like brutes, and treading them under foot ; and that in the name

of Him who sacrificed Himself to save them ! I say these people must have known that they were not models of virtue, and that the Almighty would punish them in his own time after a terrible fashion.

Sometimes, when bad news was spread abroad, whether at the market or round about the barracks, or in the villages, one felt a kind of thrill of rage pass through the crowd ; the patriots looked at one another and turned pale ; a moment, and all was quite calm, but another drop had been added to the cup of sorrows, which was filling slowly, and which must overflow one day.

I turn to a more agreeable subject, which I remember with pleasure : the marriage of Christine Létumier and Claude Bonhomme, the son of the cartwright at Mittelbronn, in January, 1792. This was the first constitutional marriage which took place at Baraques. Létumier, who was considered a rich man, since the capital investment he had made in national property, had invited several of his relatives from Messin. They did not all accept, but his cousins, Maurice Bonnet,

president of the club at Courcelles, and Susanne Chassin, the daughter of a cabinet-maker in the same place, arrived.

Poor Christine, who did not resent to me that I had loved another, chose me to be Marguerite's valentine. What a good creature she was ! When she came and took my hand, and said :

“ Here is your valentine ! ”

My eyes filled with tears, and I looked at her with a full heart. She smiled at me a little sadly, and asked me :

“ Are you glad, Michel ? ”

“ Oh, yes, very glad,” I answered, “ and I wish you all the happiness in the world, Christine.”

Chauvel, Maître Jean in the uniform of the citizen guard, Cochard, Huré, Raphaël Manque, our former president, and several others were of the wedding-party. The old court-house swarmed with patriots, and when Joseph Boileau, girt with his official scarf, pronounced with a majestic air the constitutional words, “ The law unites you,” a shout of “ Long live the Nation,” shook the

windows of the hall, and was heard as far as the Place d'Armes.

This was quite another thing than the simple inscription at the curé's house, upon a sheet of paper, which was often lost, so that one knew neither the day of one's birth or that of one's marriage. I have known several persons who have been so situated, and when the old papers at the curé's house had to be put in order, so as to have their contents transferred to the State register, it was Freylig, our secretary of the commune, who was employed to do it.

Everyone was pleased with the new ceremony, and when it was completed, Jean Rat, whose hat was gaily decorated with tri-coloured ribbons, conducted us back to Baraques to the music of his clarionet.

When we were outside the town we laughed and joked, and ran, to warm ourselves. Marguerite trotted beside me, leaning on my arm ; Christine, who preceded us, seemed to have consoled herself with Claude Bonhomme, and the old people behind us chattered and hurried along as well as they

were able. Chauvel was as gay as a lark, and Létumier, holding his hat to prevent it being carried away by the wind, cried :

“ We shall remember that Christine’s wedding-day was the third of January, 1792, and that it was not warm weather.”

To tell the truth, we were all crying with cold when we reached the “ Three Pigeons.” How delightful it was to enter the eating-room, which was deliciously warm, and where the table was already laid, for the wedding festivities were to take place at the tavern, Létumier’s wife being ignorant of any cooking beyond her *pot-au-feu* on Sundays. What fun it was ! How shall I describe the huge dishes of cabbage and sausages ; the magnificent hams ; the sideboard covered with tarts, fruit, and bottles ; the emotion of Christine’s mother ; the good appetite of the guests ; Chauvel’s speech about the new patriotic ceremonies, which were soon to replace the old customs of the savages of Gaul ; the talking ; the toasts drunk in honour of the bride ; the coarse jokes of the old people, which the young ones had suffi-

cient good sense not to understand. What a time it was! and how it has all passed away!

I have only to think of it, and Marguerite is seated by my side; her little white cap tied under her rosy chin, the cockade over her ear; we laugh and talk, I look at her brown eyes and I say to Marguerite:

"Will you have this? Will you have that, Marguerite? Take a little more wine? a bit of tart?"

How delightful it is to talk to her without restraint, to wait on her, to call her my Valentine; to see that she regards me with favour, and has no attention for any one but me. These are things which we cannot describe.

Towards evening the house was filled with the lads and lasses from Baraques, who came to dance, for in my young days people always danced at a wedding. How delightful it was to hear Jean Rat's clarionet strike up the Esterhazy Valse in the great hall behind the garden; to take Marguerite on my arm, and say to her:

"Come, my valentine, that is Jean Rat's clarionet."

Marguerite was surprised ; she asked me :

"Where are we going, Michel?"

"Going ? To dance, of course."

"But I don't know how to dance, Michel."

"Nonsense ! Every girl knows how to dance !"

The others were already dancing, and I wanted to get Marguerite into the whirl, my heart was bounding with joy ; but imagine my astonishment when I found that she really did not know how to dance ! she could not do it, her little feet would not move in time to the music—she was hopelessly awkward. I could not believe it.

"Take courage," said I, "and try again. See, it is not difficult."

And then I showed her the step in a corner of the room. We tried, but no ! she could not do it. I was in despair. The others began to gather round and look at us, and laugh. Marguerite was annoyed, and presently she said in a vexed tone :



"I can't, and that is all about it. You see I can't. Do you go and dance with some one else, and I will go and help Dame Catherine."

In spite of my vexation, she went away. More than one pretty girl looked at me, as much as to say :

"We know how to dance, Michel ; come and ask us !"

But I would rather have broken my neck than danced with another. I went out alone into the little lane. Marguerite was just going into the kitchen, where Dame Catherine, Létumier's wife, Nicole, and Susanne Chassin were talking together in great indignation :

"It is an abomination ! To sing such songs ! songs against the queen ! But there, men have no sense, the best of them is good for nothing !"

And so on.

In the large eating-room on the right I heard the patriots laughing like madmen, shuffling their feet on the floor, and singing a song called "Madame Veto." It was Létu-

mier's cousin Maurice who sang, the others joined in as chorus.

Of course I went to look, and on opening the door I saw an extraordinary spectacle. Maurice,—who wore a sky-blue coat with huge lappets, two watches, with breloques hanging over his yellow breeches, a frilled shirt, a tri-coloured cravat, and a large hat which was put on his head sideways—was dancing frantically, shaking his foot in the air, with his knee up to his chin. He swayed about, he jumped, he twisted himself into attitudes, and made grimaces which it would be impossible to imagine; and all the time he was singing “*Madame Veto.*”

This was a song full of horrible accusations against the queen, and all the patriots around the table laughed until they fell back on their chairs, their arms hanging by their sides, and their mouths open from ear to ear. The walls shook with their uproarious laughter, and still Maurice went on ducking his head, kicking his legs up in the air, and singing :

“*Madame Veto a fait ceci !  
Madame Veto a fait cela !*”

This song began with the affair of the Cardinal. There were dozens of verses, one worse than another. I could not help feeling ashamed of them, myself, but all those who were there, and who had suffered so long from the extravagance of the Court, gave full vent to their satisfaction, and could not have enough of the song.

At length Létumier himself was infected by this devilish dance, and began to imitate Maurice, and then Maître Jean, and our former president, Raphaël, did the same.

## CHAPTER XI.

HOW things change in this world ! This tavern of the “Three Pigeons,” whither the officers of Rouergue, Schœnau, and La Fère, all of the nobility, dukes, marquises, and counts, had been used to come ;—where they had danced with the ladies of Phalsbourg, gravely, nobly, bending and turning themselves about, like wreaths of flowers ;—with their little violins, their wine, which was put to cool in the spring, and their pâtés which were carried on the back of an old soldier, in a basket — this same tavern now witnessed another dance, the dance of the patriots.

These nobles would have opened their eyes and ears if they could have seen this dance,

in which men leaped and shouted, and twisted themselves as if they were possessed ; in which all the old minuets were mocked, as well as everything else which had ceased to be ;—and if they could have heard that unending song :

“ Madame Veto a fait ceci !  
Madame Veto a fait cela ! ”

No, never before had such a scandal been witnessed. The women who were exclaiming against it were right, but that did not hinder the patriots from laughing like madmen.

Chauvel did not join in the dance. He sat at the end of the table, his bright eyes were shining, and he was quite pale with pleasure. He tapped the table with the handle of his knife, to mark the time, and cried, ironically,

“ Well done, Létumier ; that is it ! Capital, Maître Jean ; keep it up. That’s right, President Raphaël, you are making progress ! ”

And now, if you wish to know what were

this dance and this song, which were introduced among us for the first time by Maurice Bonnet, I will tell you that they formed the famous *Carmagnole*, which all the world has talked of since those days,—the dance was that which the Parisians danced, afterwards, on the Place de la Revolution, and even when they were marching on the enemy's guns :

“ Dansons la carmagnole,  
Vive le son, vive le son,  
Dansons la carmagnole,  
Vive le son du canon.”

All the revolution was in that *Carmagnole* ; a verse was added every time anything new occurred ; the former verses were forgotten, and the fresh ones made every one laugh.

I think it must have been ten o'clock that night, when Chauvel, seeing that the patriots were utterly exhausted, and that they had sat down to refresh themselves with hot wine, said :

“ Citizens, you have danced a great deal,

and we have all enjoyed ourselves very much ; but I think it is time we should go home and sleep ; that we may be fit to attend to our business to-morrow morning."

" Nonsense ! " said Maître Jean ; " we have time until midnight."

" No, we have had enough of it," replied Chauvel ; as he rose and took his great-coat down from the rack.

Almost all the patriots of the city followed his example.

" You will take another glass of hot wine ? " said Maître Jean.

" No, thank you, the best things must come to an end," replied Chauvel, as he shook Létumier's hand. " Good night, Citizen Maurice."

I was putting Marguerite's hooded cloak over her shoulders, and saying to her :

" Cover yourself up warmly, it is terribly cold."

She was very serious, but Chauvel appeared quite content, and was calling to her, from the lane :

“Marguerite, Marguerite, we must be going!”

No one supposes, I hope, that I would leave my valentine so soon. She took my arm.

I had pulled my otter-skin cap over my ears, and we went on before the others, up the path, which was white with snow.

It was one of those beautiful nights in January, when one can see the endless outlines of the hills, and here and there in the distance the steeples of the village churches, the roofs of the old farm-houses, the long alleys of poplars bending under the frost. These nights are the coldest in all the year, and the ice snaps under one's feet like glass.

But, how beautiful the sky is, with its shimmering blue and red stars, and the thousands of pure white ones, which grow upon the vision, farther and farther away, like specks of dust, so that one's soul is lifted up, and one strives to understand that boundless, infinite grandeur. And when the



warm hand of the woman you love rests on your arm, when her heart is beating near your own, when you are both thinking the same thoughts of love and admiration ;— what does the cold matter to you then ? You do not think of it, you are boundlessly happy, and you would like to sing a hymn of praise, like the men of old time. One of those fine winter nights is the church, the temple of God.

Behind us came Chauvel, Raphaël, Collin, all the other patriots of the town, gossiping and laughing ; and, all of a sudden, as we neared the glacis, I began to sing, almost without knowing it, an old peasant's song, which I had learned in my childhood. My voice went out far into the night, I knew not how, it was the utterance of love. Marguerite's hand rested more closely on my arm, and she whispered :

“ How strong and sweet your voice is, Michel ; how well you sing ! ”

The others, following us, were silent, listening to me. When we reached the glacis, Marguerite said :

"We must wait for them."

We turned back, and met them. Chauvel said :

"I did not know that you sang so well, Michel ; I never heard you before. Your voice is like your father's, but stronger and more manly ; the true voice of the peasant. When the song of the *Rights of Man* is composed, you shall sing it at our club."

"I should like to hear him sing the *Carmagnole*," said President Raphaël.

"Bah !" said Chauvel, who was grave again, "the *Carmagnole* is only a jest ; a thing to be laughed at among patriots, when they have been drinking good wine ; but we must have something else,—something grand and strong, like the country !"

Then we bade each other good night, and they went severally up the foot-path across the glacis, which was a short cut. I looked after Marguerite, and my heart sunk. She walked behind the others, and when she came to the end of the foot-path, she looked back.

Now I have told you all about that day, and that beautiful night. They have remained always present to me.

## CHAPTER XII.

ABOUT this time, our minds began to be occupied with apprehensions of war. The boldness of our enemies increased day by day ; not only did the refractory priests excite La Vendée, but the Archbishops of Trèves and Mayence, and the *ci-devant* Bishop of Strasbourg, that honest Cardinal de Rohan, who had already caused so much scandal, were employing agents to enlist all the vagabonds on the frontier, with a view to invading us. The recruiting agents, men who had been tax-collectors, searchers at the toll-gates, and other officials of the suppressed system of fleecing the poor,—also distributed money among the beggars and rogues in our district, to induce them to rise against the Revolution.

This was done openly, and then the general indignation broke out. Chauvel first, and then Lallemand, of Lixheim, and all the heads of the clubs affiliated to the Jacobins, denounced this abominable traffic ; and, notwithstanding the silence of the King's ministers, who shut their eyes to the manœuvres of the *émigrés*, Camille Desmoulins, Fréron, and Brissot, made such a noise about it, that it became necessary to send orders to put a stop to it.

At Lixheim, one of these recruiting agents lodged at the tavern of the "Grand Cerf," and everyone knew that he was enlisting soldiers at the expense of the emigration, for the nobles did not mean to *serve*, they intended to *command*, and they must have peasants to defend their cause ; as for them they were all born lieutenants, captains, or colonels, by the grace of God.

One fine morning this worthy crimp was enrolling some poor lads who had been sent to him by one of the refractory priests of the district, when the National Gendarmes knocked at his door. He looked out, saw the cocked hats, and instantly ran out at the

back of the house and hid himself in a hay-loft. But he had been seen, and the brigadier climbed up into the loft, and, finding nothing, began to prod the hay slowly with his sword, saying, as he did so :

“ Where is the rascal ? He is not here ! No, he is not here ! ”

But at last a loud cry revealed that he was there, and the brigadier withdrew his sword, all red with blood, and said :

“ Ah, I was mistaken. I think he is under the hay.”

Then they brought out the wretch, a one-eyed man, named Passavent, and found that the sword had passed through his side, so that he died the same evening, very happily for him. On searching his room a number of letters were found which proved that he had been furnished with sums of money by the nobles for the purpose of exciting civil war, and also several from refractory priests, who sent him lads to enrol. So that, if the brigadier had not run him through, he would certainly have been hanged without mercy.

He was buried, and after that innumerable arrests of recruiting agents, refractory priests, and vagabonds of all sorts took place. The priest Eléonore disappeared for a while ; to the great grief of my mother, who did not know where to go to fulfil her religious duties. These rascals thought of nothing but creating disturbance among us, and many of those who were afterwards massacred at the Abbaye were creatures of this kind, without faith or law, capable of selling the country to the foreigner for money and privileges.

It was well known that these associations existed on the Rhine,—that of Mirabeau-Tonneau, near Ettenheim ; that of Condé, near Worms ; and the most important, at Coblenz, where the Count d'Artois and the Count de Provence were.

One solitary prince of the blood, the Duc d'Orleans, who afterwards called himself Philippe-Egalité, remained in France ; his son, the colonel of the Chartres dragoons, was serving in the Army of the North.

This sketch of the state of affairs will enable you to understand the disquiet of our

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district ; all this body of *émigrés* might come down upon us, by a forced march, in a single night. It was very important not to let them think that we were afraid of them, and, if they had been unsupported, we should not have been ; we should merely have laughed at them ; but they were supported by the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria ; and then, by forsaking their colours, they had disorganized our armies. Thus, we knew, at least, that they owed all their strength to our enemies ; and we found out, more and more clearly, what fools we had been to give them our money for so many centuries ; since they could do us no harm without foreign assistance.

I remember on one occasion we had a great deal of amusement at our club, on the subject of the *émigrés*. It was on the 6th December, St. Nicholas' day. Joseph Gossard, a wine-seller, from the neighbourhood of Toul, a true Lorrainer, tall, thin, with a red face, and a curly head, and as gay as a lark, was telling us about the trip he had just made to Coblenz, with samples. I think I see him now,



leaning on one of the benches, describing the confusion of all the monks, the superiors of convents, the canonesses, the nobles, the fine gentlemen ; and the lackeys who followed them to wash, and brush, and shave them ; to cut their nails, to dress and undress them like children ; and who could no longer live at their expense, since they were penniless.

Nothing like it had ever been heard. Gossard mimicked their grimaces, when they found themselves among the poor Germans, who did not understand a word they said. He gave us a representation of an old *Marquise*, with her fallals and finery, her great cane, and her high heels, at an inn at Worms. This silly old woman still possessed some money, and she gave her orders authoritatively,—she wanted this, she wanted that, and the servants looked at one another, and asked :

“Wass ? Wass ?” (What ? what ?)

“Wass ? Wass ?” cried the old woman, “I am telling you to warm my bed, you blockheads.”

Our club shouted with laughter.

Then he imitated the old nobleman, who smirked and grinned in order to pretend to be gay and careless as they had been at Versailles ; the young women, who were running after their missing husbands ; the Capuchins who mounted guard at Tréves, with other monks who had enlisted in the enemy's forces : the astonishment of those who went to the post, expecting to receive bank bills on Amsterdam or Frankfort, and received instead empty letters, in which their intendants apprised them that their châteaux, their woods and their lands had been sequestered to the nation.

Gossard opened his eyes wide, and lengthened out his cheeks. We could see these people, accustomed to live at other people's expense, and now worried by the waiters for the amount of their six weeks' bills. Then he described to us the hotel *du Rhin*, and mimicked the terrible General Bender—who was to bring us all to our senses—as he narrated his last campaign in Belgium ; how he had had the patriots shot and hung, so that at present the country enjoyed the utmost tranquillity.

But the best of all was when he mimicked the vexation of the Elector on hearing that the *émigrés* had lodged our princes in his palaces, without taking the trouble to ask his leave ! Maître Jean laughed until he had to hold his sides, and even Chauvel said he had never been so much amused.

Joseph Gossard repeated the same performance at all the clubs on his road ; and it was highly successful everywhere ; in fact, this man might have made a great deal of money by the representation of his visit to Coblenz. Every one would have been glad to pay for seeing the comedy ; but he did it all for pure patriotism, and was satisfied if he could please the patriots, and sell them his wine.

I tell you this anecdote to make you understand what sort of people France had been maintaining by the labour of her children before '89 ; and to prove to you still more clearly how little sense they possessed, I have only to repeat the reply of *Monsieur*, who afterwards became Louis XVIII., to the National Assembly, when they required him

to return to France, if he desired to preserve his eventual right to the Regency.

. This was what he answered :

“ Men of the French Assembly, calling itself National! Sound reason,—in virtue of the first, second, and third articles of the unwritten laws of common sense,—requires you to come to your right mind within two months, counting from this day ; failing which, after the expiration of the said period, you shall be held to have abdicated your right to be regarded as reasonable beings, and shall be considered madmen fit only to tenant madhouses.”

This is what a royal prince replied to the nation who called him to the Regency, in case of his brother's death ! It had been well worth our while to crush the life out of a great people under a terrible load of taxation, and to leave them still millions of debts, in order to rear such creatures as he. The poorest boy in our village would have profited better by the money that might have been given to instruct him.

All the *émigrés* put together could have

been swallowed up at a mouthful by the nation ; but the sovereigns of Europe were threatening us, because they were very reasonably frightened at seeing a sensible people who might set the example of courage to others growing up. War was now a constant subject of discussion. The dispute had begun at the Jacobins, between Brissot and Robespierre.

Brissot wanted us to go to war immediately against the *émigrés*, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Austria. Robespierre said that our real danger was in the interior, that the traitors who were ready to deliver up their country in order to get back their privileges, were the enemies we ought first to fight.

This was the gist of these two speeches, of which Chauvel sold thousands of copies ; citizens, peasants, and soldiers—everyone—flocked to buy them. The shop was never empty, and Marguerite had hardly time to serve the customers.

The dispute became embittered ; the club

was divided ; Danton, Desmoulins, Carron, Billaud de Varennes were for Robespierre ; they said the King, the queen, the Court, and the *émigrés*, had need of the war to recover themselves, and that they were driving us into it ; that the war was the last resource of vanquished despotism ; and that therefore we must be on our guard, and not risk the loss of what we had gained.

Brissot persisted ; he belonged to the Legislative Assembly, which, at this time, divided itself, like the club of Jacobins, into two parties, the *Girondins* and the *Montagnards*.

The *Montagnards* wanted to settle matters in the interior in the first instance ; the *Girondins* wanted to begin from without.

Louis XVI. leaned towards the *Girondins* ; he had nothing to lose on that side ; if we won, our victory would strengthen his hands to arrest the revolution, for the army will always hold with a king who wins battles and gives promotion. If we were beaten, the King of Prussia and the Emperor of

Austria would re-establish everything among us as it had been before the States General. This is what the Queen Marie Antoinette hoped for ; she wished to owe her throne to her enemies.

The *Girondins*, Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadot, Gensonné, &c., were then forwarding the interests of the Crown ; and the *Jacobins*, Robespierre, Danton, Couthon, Billaud de Varennes, Desmoulins, Merlin (de Thionville), were forwarding the interests of the nation. This is all I can tell you about that.

The nearer we drew to war the more terrible the excitement became ; the more the King, the Queen, the ministers, and their generals were mistrusted. We saw plainly that the interests of these people were not our interests, when Louis XVI. proceeded to choose his ministers from among them. But these things are well known, and I wish to speak to you only of our district, and of things which I have seen myself.

From the 1st January, 1792, until March,

our apprehensions of invasion continued to increase.

Phalsbourg was armed ; guns were mounted upon the ramparts ; embrasures constructed ; and Narbonne, the War Minister, inspected all the strong places upon the frontier, and had them put into a state of defence ; all sensible men saw that the danger was near.

At the same time our enemies in the interior redoubled their audacity. The society of Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman citizens was reinforced, the constitutional priests were assassinated in the bye-ways, their houses were pillaged, and their gardens ravaged.

A deputy from Strasbourg complained loudly at the Jacobins that the directory of the Lower Rhine did not take measures to stop these crimes ; already more than fifty patriot priests had been killed ; and the citizens who protested were arrested by those who ought to have supported and defended them. The Mayor, Dietrich, was accused,



throughout the whole of Lower Alsace, of neglecting his duties ; the assignats, in consequence of these troubles, had already lost twenty per cent., which precisely suited the views of the aristocrats.

You may judge what was the grief of the people, and the fury which seized them ! If, in later times, Schneider, the vicar general of the bishopric of Strasbourg, had refractory priests guillotined by dozens, to avenge the cowardly murder of the constitutional priests, is it to be wondered at ? It is a terrible thing to do the office of an executioner, but people cannot always hold out their throats to the knife like sheep. It would be too pleasant for ferocious wretches if they had nothing to fear—those who kill ought to expect a like fate.

While the patriots were being assassinated on the high-roads, foreign spies were abroad all through the district spreading bad news, and false assignats, which the *émigrés* fabricated at Frankfort. No one trusted a stranger any more ; people ceased to tell one

another the news ; even at the club we were on our guard, and those who desired to become members were obliged to write down their names beforehand.

## CHAPTER XIII.

OUR business was going on well at the forge. Maître Jean was hoping to recommence his operations at Pickelholtz ; he had only two months to wait, for our sowing season had commenced early in March, but his mind was sorely troubled. He was afraid that before March the war might break out, that the emigrants, with their friends the Prussians and the Austrians, might come and burn the barn which he had built, and the fine new roof which he had put upon his farm-house, devastate his fields, and even try to hang him on a tree in his orchard. This idea made him so angry, that every evening he would declaim against and curse the aristocrats, striking his great fist upon the table,

and shouting that, instead of awaiting their arrival it would be better to go to the Rhine to disperse their Assembly, and to burn the farms, the barns, and the crops of the Electorate, than to wait until the wicked race should come to set fire to our farms, pillage our barns, drink our wine, and enjoy themselves at our expense. He held with the Girondins, maintaining that patriot volunteers would not be wanting for such an expedition, and declaring that in case of need he would march at the head of his company, make a descent upon the valley of the Sarre, and trample down everything which should offer resistance.

The peasants of Alsace and Lorraine who came to the "Three Pigeons," were delighted to listen to him; their faces shone with satisfaction; they tapped the tables, ordered wine lavishly, and joined in an uproarious chorus of "Ca ira! Ca ira!"

Thus all our minds became more and more embittered day by day.

There were heavy rains in February. Many people said that the seed would rot in the

ground, and we should have a bad year. Rumours of dearth prevailed, everything was scarce. In the south, the fear of famine, added to the preaching of the refractory priests, who announced the end of the world to be at hand, spread despair around, and gathered together the elements of the awful tempest which afterwards broke out.

Our *mot d'ordre* at the club was "*No war.*" Chauvel did not wish for war, he maintained that it would be our greatest misfortune ; that good ideas must have time to take root, and that we ought to profit by the time which remained to root up the bad grass which injured the good grain, by stifling it and depriving it of nourishment. He was incessantly preaching concord and union to us, and telling us that the enemies of the human kind were trying to wrest them from us, by dividing us as much as possible, and keeping together, in order to get the better of us.

"This is the only way," he cried ; "do not forget it. So long as the patriots—workmen, citizens, and peasants—hold each other's

hands, they have nothing to fear ; but once divided, they will be lost ; the old privileges will be restored ; one class will have all the enjoyments, and the other all the miseries of life."

He told us great truths, and we afterwards proved that we had profited by them, for union between true patriots has never been broken, and they have done great things, not only for the interests of France, but for those of all peoples.

Lafayette and his friends, Bailly, Dupont, and the brothers Lameth were no longer spoken of, they were believed to have sold themselves to the Court. After the acceptance of the Constitution by the King, Lafayette had resigned his post as General of the National Guard ; and when afterwards he wished to be appointed Mayor of Paris, the electors chose Pétion. Then he went away to Auvergne.

The " *Courrier*," the " *Orateur du Peuple*," the " *Débats des Jacobins*," and the other gazettes which Chauvel received were not troubling themselves further about them, when, the National Assembly having sum-

moned the electors of Trèves and Mayence to enforce the dissolution of the Assembly of Emigrés at those places, the electors refused, and demanded the re-establishment of the German princes in their possessions in Alsace. The Emperor Leopold of Austria declared that if these electors were attacked, he would come to their assistance. Then the King replied that if the Assemblies were not dispersed by the 15th of January, he would take arms against them, and the Assembly formally pronounced the King's brothers, the Prince de Condé, and Mirabeau the younger, under accusation of the crime of conspiracy. Three armies, each consisting of fifty thousand men, were formed from Dunkerque to Philippeville, from Philippeville to Lauterbourg, from Lauterbourg to Bâle, under the command of Luckner, Lafayette, and Rochambeau :

Everybody believed that the war was about to break out ; a state of things which lasted until March, and during this time the fury of the Royalists was let loose against the Jacobin Club, which their newspapers denounced as

“a brigand’s cavern. The “*Feuillants*” newspapers, written by Barnave, André Chénier, and others, reiterated the same offensive phrases. But the Jacobins no longer answered them, they were not worth the trouble. The real battle was between the *Montagnards* and the *Girondins*. It began in February, 1792, and we knew that it could end only in the death of the one or the other party.

In the whole history of the world such fine speeches on war had never before been made. Every man who had any heart was obliged to take part for or against, because his own rights, his life, his blood, his family, and his country were at stake. You may read them any day, they have all been preserved; you can judge for yourself whether I have praised the genius of the men of that time too highly.

Our excitement had become so intense, the people of Paris and the provinces were so eager to be rid of the embarrassment, trouble, and menace which weighed upon them, they were so resolved to guard their property and



their rights, they so bitterly detested the men who by artifice and fraud had tried to deprive them of all they had gained—that we should certainly have ended by rushing upon them like wolves, when the Emperor of Austria, Leopold, who had just sent forty thousand men into the Low Countries, and twenty thousand to the Rhine, died of his debaucheries. He had taken poisons to sustain his strength, and they had produced gangrene.

Then some good people were filled with the hope that his son Francis, who was at present King of Bohemia and Hungary, and would shortly be crowned Emperor of Austria, would be more reasonable and would withdraw his troops from our frontiers, considering that our affairs did not concern him. But, on the contrary, no sooner had this young prince ascended the throne, than, guided by the advice of the aristocrats and priests of his country, he summoned the National Assembly not only to restore their possessions in Alsace to the German princes, but also to re-establish the Three Orders in France; and to make restitution of the Church property.

This was too much ! He treated us like servants, to whom one has only to speak haughtily to make them obey. Our blood boiled at this insolence, and on the 23rd of April, every one insisted on fighting, in spite of Chauvel, who kept on telling us that war must always inevitably be in the interests of princes, and against the interests of peoples. As for Maître Jean, he moved a resolution that the club should send an immediate demand for war to the National Assembly, and he wanted to quarrel with Chauvel himself, whom he reproached for not sufficiently considering the honour of the country, the first and greatest of our possessions.

I was divided between the two ; my common sense told me Chauvel was right, but my anger inclined me towards Maître Jean.

All this day, which was Monday, it rained heavily, and we were depressed and angry. Every few minutes we paused in our work to curse the wretches who had brought these insults upon us.

After supper, at half-past seven, we set out

in the mud: Maître Jean with his large umbrella, Laramier wrapped up in his great cloak, and the rest of the patriots following them.

On arriving at Phalsbourg, the symptoms of disturbance were universal: people were running from one house to another, talking eagerly in groups in the dark lanes—we thought at first that it was on account of the exercises about to be made at the club, but when we reached the market-place we saw there was something more and different.

Chauvel's shop was open, and so filled with people that the crowd was swarming over the doorway into the street, and in the midst of this mass of people Marguerite was standing on a chair in the centre of the shop, a newspaper in her hand.

As long as I live I shall have Marguerite before my eyes as I saw her that evening; her little brown head under the lamp near the low ceiling, her face animated, her eyes shining, as she read with fire and enthusiasm.

She had just concluded

the Baraquins came running up through the mud, and, as we tried to make a space for ourselves, of course a noise arose, and then she turned her head, and cried out in her clear, firm voice :

“Listen ! This is the decree of the National Assembly ! Now it is France who speaks !”

Then she began to read again :

“ DECREE OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY.

“ The National Assembly, deliberating upon the formal proposition of the King, considering that the Court of Vienna, notwithstanding existing treaties, has openly accorded protection to French rebels ; that it has formed a compact with several European princes against the safety and independence of the French Nation ; that Francis I., King of Hungary and Bohemia, has refused, by his notes of 18th March and 7th April, to renounce this compact ; that, notwithstanding the proposition made to him on the 11th March, 1792,

that the troops on both sides of the frontier should be reduced to a peace footing, he has continued and augmented his hostile preparations ; that he has formally attacked the sovereignty of the French Nation, by declaring that he will support the pretensions of the German princes who hold property in France, to whom the nation has frequently offered indemnities ; that he has endeavoured to create disunion among the French citizens, and to arm them against each other, by offering to the malcontents the support of foreign powers : considering, lastly, that his refusal to reply to the late despatches of the King of the French, leaves no hope of obtaining redress for these various grievances by the means of an amicable negotiation, and is equivalent to a declaration of war :—

*“ Decrees that the question is urgent.”*

At that moment I was seized with enthusiasm, and, waving my hat in the air, I shouted :

“ Long live the Nation !”

All the others who were behind me, took

up the cry, which soon spread into the little square.

Marguerite turned and looked at me with joy in her face, and then she raised her hand and said :

“Listen ! This is not all.”

Silence was at once re-established, and she went on :

“The National Assembly declares that the French nation, faithful to the principles consecrated by its constitution, of not undertaking any war of conquest, and never employing its strength against the liberty of any people, takes arms only for the defence of its own liberty and independence ; that the war which it is obliged to sustain, is not a war of nation against nation, but the righteous defence of a free people against the aggression of a king ; that the French will never confound their brethren with their real enemies ; that they will neglect no means of assuaging the horrors of war, preserving and guarding property from injury, and causing the misfortunes, which are inseparable from war, to fall upon those only who have leagued them-

selves together against the cause of liberty; that it hereby adopts beforehand all those foreigners who, abjuring the cause of its enemies, shall come and range themselves under its banner, and consecrate their efforts to the defence of liberty; and that it will favour, by every means in its power, their establishment in France.

“Deliberating upon the formal proposition of the King, and after having decreed the urgency of the question, the National Assembly decrees war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia.”

Then hundreds of voices shouted: “Long live the Nation!”

The shouts reached the barracks, and the soldiers of the regiment of Poitou, which had replaced that of Auvergne, appeared at the windows, waving their large hats in the air. Lights shone from room to room, the sentinels below raised their hats on the points of their bayonets. People shook hands, and cried:

“It is done; the war is declared!”

Small thick rain filled the air like a fog,

but every one in the crowd was burning with fever heat.

Marguerite had stepped down from her chair.

I made my way towards her through the crowd ; she stretched out her hand to me, her face still bright and smiling, and said :

“ Well, Michel, we are going to fight ! ”

“ Yes, Marguerite, I was of your father’s opinion ; but since the others are attacking us, we will defend our rights to the death.”

I was still holding her hand tightly, and looking at her in admiration, for she was more beautiful to me than ever, with her cheeks flushed and her great black eyes full of courage ; when Chauvel came in, his head bare, and his hair matted on his temples by the rain, followed by five or six of the staunchest patriots whom he had gone to fetch.

“ Ah ! you are here,” he said, seeing us in the shop, “ the weather has not hindered you. That’s right, we are going to hold a meeting.”



"Ha!" said Maître Jean, "we are going to have war, you see, after all, and, this time, in spite of ourselves."

"Yes," said Chauvel, roughly, "I did not wish for it, but since the others will have it, we will do our best. Come along."

We went to the club opposite. The old building was filled with people, and the hum of voices.

Chauvel took his place, but without seating himself, and began immediately to speak to us, in a clear, thrilling voice, which was distinctly heard outside.

He told us that he had wished for peace, the greatest possession of mankind, after liberty; but that now, war having been declared, he who should desire anything except the triumph of his country, he who would not sacrifice his fortune and his life in the defence of the independence of the nation, ought to be regarded as the greatest of cowards and the vilest of wretches.

He told us that this would be no ordinary war; that it must mean the liberty or the slavery of men, eternal injustice, or the rights

of all, the greatness of France, or her debasement.

He told us we must not think it could all be done in a day, but that we must have strength and resolution for years ; that the despots were going to fling down upon us their poor soldiers, who had been reared in ignorance, and in respect for privileges, and that now there was nothing for it but the shedding of torrents of blood, and desperate fighting to the death.

“ But,” said he, “ he who defends his rights by force, is in the right ; he who wants to hold himself above the rights of others is a criminal. Justice is, therefore, on our side.”

Then he went on to say that this war would not be on our side a war of soldiers, but one of citizens ; that we should confront our enemies not with guns and bayonets only, but with reason, good sense, and good feeling ; that we should always offer them good at the same time with evil, and that, let the people oppressed by these things be ever so narrow-minded, they would come to understand in the end that they were defend-

ing their chains against brethren who have come to break them, and then they would bless us and join with us, and the rights of all should be founded upon the common basis of eternal justice.

He called this "a war of propaganda," in which good books, good speeches, offers of peace, of alliance, of advantageous treaties, were marching in the vanguard, together with the rights of man.

But when,—near the end of his speech,—he spoke of the wretches who were trying to take us in the rear; he turned pale, and cried that if these people persisted in their manœuvres, a terrible element must necessarily be introduced into the war; because, in order to save the country, the patriots would be forced to apply to the traitors themselves the bloody laws which they wanted to impose on us.

Then this rigid, plain-spoken man, who dealt ordinarily in nothing but hard facts and dry reasoning, broke into sudden emotion, and made us all tremble, as he went on, in a smothered voice :

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“They will have it so, these unfortunate men, they will have it so! A hundred times we have offered them peace, and even yet we hold out a hand to them, and say :

“‘Let us be equals ; let us forget our mutual injustice, and think no more of it ; but that we may be secure for the future, renounce your unnatural privileges !’

“What do they reply ?

“‘No ! you are our rebellious slaves ! God has made you to crawl before us, and to support us by your toil, from father to son. And we will not hesitate at any measures which may avail to bring you under our yoke again ; not at open treason, not at raising the interior of the country, not at forming an alliance with the enemies of the country !’

“Well, then, if we, on our side, do not hesitate at any measures to secure our freedom, with what can they reproach us ? Citizens, I have done ; let each man do his duty ; each man be ready to march when France shall call him. Let us be united, and let our rallying cry be ever : ‘Freedom or death !’ ”

He sat down, and the applause broke out like thunder. No one who has not witnessed similar scenes can form an idea of them. We embraced our neighbours, and we all, workmen, citizens, and soldiers, became brothers ; only two classes existed henceforth for us : the aristocrats that we might hate, and the patriots that we might love them. In our hearts there was a strange mingling of tenderness and terrible indignation.

Other members of the club spoke, but none produced so much impression as Chauvel.

We came home very late, and as it still rained heavily, and the night was dark, we were all silent on the road, each was sunk in his own thoughts. Maitre Jean, only, spoke a few words occasionally, chiefly to the effect that the chief point to be secured was that the generals should be patriots, and that it was a serious matter to consider that we might not have such, because they would be chosen by the King. Our enthusiasm was succeeded by distrust ; we began to

think that Chauvel was right when he said that our chief danger was internal treachery. But how could I enumerate the ideas and apprehensions which pass through the minds of people in such a crisis as that which we were going through.

All I can tell you' distinctly is, that I saw then that my life was going to change; that I should certainly have to go away, and that for me, as for thousands of others, love of my country would have to replace the love of my village, of home, of my father, of the forge, and of Marguerite!

Musing on these things I went up to my garret. I thought the situation very serious, but nevertheless, in spite of all Chauvel had said about the store of patience we should need, it never occurred to Maître Jean, to Létumier, or to me, that we were in for twenty-three years of war.

We had no notion that all the peoples of Europe, beginning with the Germans, would come down, with their kings, their princes, and their nobles, to crush us, because we wished to do them good, as well as ourselves,

by proclaiming the Rights of Man ; we could not have conceived such unnatural stupidity, and now, after I have seen it, I am incapable of comprehending it.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

**Y**OU must know that for several months before this, a number of young men belonging to the National Guard had gone as volunteers : chiefly lawyers' clerks, the sons of shopkeepers, strong, well educated, brave young fellows ; Rottembourg, Dewingre, Duplain, and Soye, were among them. Some died for their country, others became captains, colonels, and generals. Their names were written down at the commune ; they received eighty livres, and set out to join Rochambeau, at Maubeuge, Lafayette, at Metz, or Luckner, in his camp near us, between Bitche and Belfort. When we saw them going away, we thought :



“There are the firmest pillars of liberty. If the Austrians overthrow them, we shall find them hard to replace.”

Imagine, then, our astonishment, when, on the 29th of April, intelligence reached us that our National Volunteers had run away before the Austrians, without even closing bayonets with them, and that our old soldiers of the line had followed their example. This seemed so unnatural, that no one could believe it ; and we all said :

“The refractory priests are spreading these reports. It is time we should go, and hunt them out of the mountain, once for all.”

Unhappily, on the evening of the same day, the post from Paris confirmed the news. Our paid National Guards and other troops had marched from Valenciennes to surprise Fleurus, Tournay, and Mons, where the patriotic inhabitants were waiting for us. But Rochambeau, who had just been made a marshal by the King, had sent information in a sealed letter to the Austrian General, Beaulieu, that he intended to attack him ; so that our columns, advancing without any

suspicion, had found forces double, nay triple their number, in position upon their route, with artillery and cavalry ; in short, with all that was necessary to crush them.

This is Rochambeau's own report to the King. If, in later days, Bonaparte, Hoche, Massèna, and the other generals of the Republic, had given our enemies information of the movements they intended to make, I do not think they would have carried off many victories.

The same newspapers told us that the National Volunteers had exclaimed as they disbanded themselves :

“ We are betrayed !”

Most sensible men thought they were right, and maintained that the noble officers who remained in the army had wished to give them up to the enemy. The cry of “ treason !” arose on every side ; and not only was it discussed at our club, but the “ *Moniteur*,” of the 3rd May, 1722, has the following :

A deputation from the *Cordeliers* presents  
at the bar of the National Assembly ;  
the speaker of the deputation says :

‘Three hundred of our brethren have perished; the fate of the Spartans at Thermopylæ has been theirs. The public voice declares them to have been the victims of treason.’

“A hundred voices exclaim: ‘Turn out those fellows! turn them out!’

“The cries are redoubled, and the deputation is forced to retire. Several deputies (*Montagnards*) demand speech. *The Assembly passes to the order of the day.*”

The majority of this Legislative Assembly, nominated by the “active” citizens only, would not have equality; the Marquis de Lafayette was its god, and he wished to have two Chambers, as in England; the High Chamber of the nobles and the bishops, and the Low Chamber of the commons. The High Chamber would have availed itself of the King’s *veto* to oppose everything which the Low Chamber might have decided upon, if it contravened the interest of the privileged classes; and thus we should have had the three orders abolished by the constitution re-established. Fortunately, Louis XVI. and the Queen, Marie Antoinette, distrusted the

Marquis ; and the Duke of Orleans sided with the Jacobins, who grew more powerful day by day.

Treason was spreading, then, in Vendée, in Bretagne, in the south, in the centre, along the frontiers, and even in the National Legislative Assembly. But the finishing stroke was put to the situation, by intelligence which reached us within a fortnight after Rochambeau had let himself be beaten by General Beaulieu, on which occasion all the rascals rejoiced in our defeat, the refractory priests announced to the patriots "the chastisement of Heaven," and the *émigrés* derided our National Guards as an army of cobblers.

On the 10th May (I shall never forget that date) we heard that the brave regiment of Saxon hussars—who had so gallantly sabred the patriot soldiers of La Fère, and of whose conduct the king had approved—had gone over to the enemy in a body, at eleven o'clock on the previous evening, and, also, that on the same day, at five o'clock in the morning, Royal Allemand had quitted

Saint Avold, on pretext of a military "marching - out," and had passed the bridge of Sarrebruck with horses, arms, and baggage.

This, then, was the plan of these honest people ; in the north, treason among the leaders ; in the east, wholesale desertion ; behind us, insurrection in the provinces.

I had long expected something of the kind ; indeed, ever since my meeting with Nicholas, after the massacre at Nancy, I had felt that a worthless foolish fellow, untaught, and who had no ideas beyond "my colonel, my captain, my queen, my king !" as a valet says "my master !" was quite capable of any cowardice, and of turning his sword against the nation which fed him. I had not liked to tell my poor father anything about Nicholas, but how was I to bring him this terrible news now ? The desertions were already known in the village ; the people were running about, shouting, and frantic with indignation ; and at any moment a bad neighbour might call in at our house, and tell the poor old people what had happened,

maliciously,—as is only too common in this world.

I set off, in my shirt sleeves, in the utmost trouble of mind, thinking it would be better that I should break this misfortune to them, gently, with precaution. But when I saw my father, sitting at the door at his work, and looking up at me with a smile, as he always did, all my precautions and plans went out of my head, my trouble was so great that I did not know what I was doing, and as he came to meet me, I cried out :

“ Oh, father, father ! Nicholas has deserted to the enemy ! ”

I had scarcely spoken, when I became fully sensible of my folly.

All my life I shall have in my ears the cry uttered by the poor old man, as he fell with his face to the earth, as though he had been felled by an axe.

I am now a very old man, and I think I hear that cry ; it was so dreadful that it turns me pale even now to recall it.

My limbs bent under me, I had to lean

against the wall ; if some neighbours had not run to support me, I should have fallen beside him.

At the same moment my mother came out of the house, crying :

“ What is it ? What is the matter ? ”

Rougereau, the wood-cutter, who was carrying my father in his arms, answered :

“ It is the doing of your brave Nicholas, who has deserted ! ”

Then she ran away out of our sight, and I went into the house, while Rougereau was laying my father on his bed.

I sat beside him, my head bent down to my knees, wanting to cry, but quite tearless, while the sweat ran off my body like cold water.

In all this wretchedness, it was a great consolation to see how many friends an honest man had, whom he had not even known until misfortune overtook him.

All the village, men, women, and children, came with tears in their eyes, to see old Bastien ; the poor worm-eaten cabin was full of people, moving gently about, and bending

beneath the old cotton curtains, to look at him, and say :

“Oh, poor old Bastien ! What a misfortune ! That rascal Nicholas has given him his death-blow.”

When I saw this I understood that others would have acted with more good sense than I had done, and I reproached myself severely ; but when I heard the voice of Maître Jean, lamenting over him, and saying, “Oh, my poor old friend ! oh, my dear, brave old man !” my heart swelled, and I groaned aloud, believing myself guilty of my father’s death.

I tell you these things in detail, because I am happy to be the son of a good man, whom every one esteemed, notwithstanding his poverty. How many are esteemed only for their money ! But in our case there was nothing to gain, and three-fourths of those who came to condole with us were richer than we. I am proud of this, yes, I am proud to be the son of a man who was so much beloved in our poor village.

But my dear father did not die this time.



Dr. Steinbrenner, whom Marguerite had sent to him as soon as she heard of our misfortune, treated him skilfully, and he recovered. But, after that, he always suffered from pain in his side, as though he were out of breath. The neighbours came to see him constantly, and he would smile at them and say :

“ It is nothing.”

My mother could not get rid of these people. I saw by her manner that she would have liked to do so, for their presence was Nicholas' condemnation, and she loved Nicholas.

The only thing which had any effect on her was that Jean Pierre Miralle, our neighbour, told her Nicholas could not return to France again without being arrested, tried by Court Martial, and shot. Miralle had served as a grenadier formerly, and he knew military law ; nevertheless she would not believe him, until Maître Jean told her that it was true ; that traitors had no other reception than that to look for in France. Then, knowing that she should see Nicholas no

more, she ran out into the fields with her apron to her eyes, to weep.

Some time after these misfortunes, one day when he and I were alone, my father put his hand to his side, and caught his breath, while he was working. I said to him :

“Do you feel pain there, father?”

He looked around, to make sure that my mother had gone out, and said :

“Yes, my boy. I feel as if some one has stabbed *me* under the left breast.”

Then he spoke of the letter which Nicholas, “fencing-master to the Royal Allemand regiment,” had written to him, and he pretended to smile. But a moment later he burst into tears, and cried, raising his hands above his head.

“Oh, my God ! forgive him ! forgive him ! The poor unhappy creature did not know what he was doing !”

He said no more, but the pain still remained, and sometimes at night, when every one was asleep, and he thought I was asleep like the others, I heard him groaning in his

bed. I tried hard to keep up his spirits. Every day when I came in, I sat down beside him, and talked to him of Stephen, who was getting on capitally, and every Sunday I brought my little brother to see our parents.

On Sundays my father was generally very well; his face was quite changed; he occupied himself with the boy, and did not think about Nicholas; and he would say to me :

“Everything goes well with us; we are the luckiest people in the world !”

But, during the week, when the long days begin at five o'clock in the morning, and do not end until nine o'clock in the evening, for the whole of which time a basket-maker is bent over his work, he had no pleasure except hearing me singing and whistling as I came in, in the evening; for I adopted this method of hiding my grief. He would always rise and come to the door, saying :

“It's you, Michel! I heard you. How have you got on to-day?”

“Very well indeed, father.”

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"That is right, sit down until I finish this basket."

But my mother would sit in the corner, near the hearth, her hands crossed on her knees, and her lips compressed. She never moved when I came in. She was always thinking of Nicholas.

Whenever I went into the town, Marguerite gave me a packet of newspapers, and every evening I read one to my father, who thought nothing could be finer than the speeches of M. Vergniaud and the other *Girondins*. He was astonished at their courage, and began to understand thoroughly that the people ought to be sovereign.

These new ideas did not come easily into the mind of the poor old man, who had been subject for so many years to the rights of the lord of the soil, and the Abbey. His mind was always dwelling on the old times, and he could not believe that all men are equals; that no differences exist between them but those of virtue and talent.

Old habits of mind are difficult to eradicate; but nevertheless a man of honest

purpose and good heart inevitably ranges himself on the side of justice in time, and therefore my father came to understand these things.

## CHAPTER XV.

IT was easy to foresee that Marshal Rochambeau, who was attacked by all the patriots, after the treason of the Saxon hussars and Royal Allemand, could not retain his position. He resigned of his own accord, and our three armies on the frontier were condensed into two, that of the North (from Dunkerque to the Moselle) under Lafayette, and that of the East (from the Moselle to the Jura) under Luckner, an old German hussar, who could hardly speak a word of French.

The Austrians, instead of advancing, waited a long time for the King of Prussia, Frederick William, who did not hurry himself, notwithstanding the entreaties of the *émigrés*.

This was a very fortunate circumstance for the nation, for we had discovered our danger ; we had found out that guns were wanting almost everywhere, and if the others had taken advantage of our need to invade us then, we should have found it a difficult matter to defend ourselves.

All the patriots wished to have guns, but the arsenal was empty, and at first the volunteers had only old muskets of Louis the Fifteenth's time, which were almost useless. Everything else was in a similar condition ; the old cannon were eaten up with rust, and the balls were all either too small, so that they rolled about, or too large, so that they could not be crammed into the guns. The powder only was dry and good, because the powder-magazines of Phalsbourg, cut in the solid rock, are perhaps the best in France.

This was what we saw and heard of our resources, and their state inspired us with the idea of providing ourselves with pikes. All the month of May, 1792, we worked very hard. A pattern pike was sent from Paris.

It was made of ash, its length was seven feet and a half, and that of the iron end, which was sharpened on both sides, was fifteen inches. There was a crook attached to the end of the iron head, for catching horsemen.

How often, when I have been forging this crook, I have thought—

“If this should pull the rascal who has cost my father so many tears, off his horse! If only it might hook him by the neck!”

When I thought of these things, my hammer flew—I worked with actual fury. What thoughts for a brother! This is the terrible work of civil war, which divides not only men of the same nation, but children of the same mother.

We forged between a thousand and fifteen hundred pikes in two months. I was obliged to employ two additional journeymen, and Maître Jean, in order to help me, went only once a week to his farm at Pickelholtz.

We were a sight to see, with our sleeves rolled up to our shoulders, our shirts open, our loins girt with handkerchiefs, our red



caps, with their cockades hanging over our ears, beating out the iron from morning to night, while one of us went and came from the fire, which roared without ceasing, to the anvil, round which the travellers stood in groups all day long.

Maitre Jean was in his element ; he had a great red cap, which half hid his thick whiskers, and when the sweat was pouring down our backs, and we could hardly breathe, he would call out, in a terrible voice—

“ Get on—get on ! *Ca ira, ça ira !* ”

“ Ah ! how we did work in those old days. The hot weather had come, and the village was green, and covered with blossom ; but in the evenings we were all so tired, that we preferred to go to bed after supper rather than to go to the club, except on Saturday evening, when we could reckon on a long rest in the morning, and on making up for it on Sunday afternoon.

It has sometimes happened to me, in my mountain journeys, to find one of these old pikes, in a woodman's or sawyer's hut, put

away behind the head of the old bed, or in a corner of the clock-case.

These people did not know what it was ! But I took the rusty iron in my hand, turned it round and round, and looked at it, and the good old patriotic times came back to me all at once, and I cried—

“Thou hast been carried gaily through Alsace, Lorraine, and Champagne ! Thou hast parried the sword stroke of an Uhlan of Würmser, and the drums of Brunswick have not made thee tremble in the hands that held thee !”

The story of the old times returned to me : once more I heard the familiar shout—

“Long live the Nation ! Long live Liberty Victory or death !”

My God ! how times have changed, and men with them !

While these things were taking place among us, stirring events were passing elsewhere.

The Feuillants regarded as, the Girondins as, the Montagnards, the Girondins as, the Montagnards

patriots  
Montagnards  
approached  
14-2

*Girondins* with having declared a war which had begun so ill ; they accused them of unduly exalting Lafayette, the man of the Champs de Mars—he who had demanded a vote of thanks for Bouillé from the National Assembly, after the massacre at Nancy ; they said—

“Dismiss Lafayette, since the ministers belong to you. Lafayette is a general, in spite of the article of the Constitution which forbids the members of the Assembly to accept any appointment from the king during the four years ensuing on its dissolution. Have him dismissed—that is your duty.”

Marat exhorted the soldiers to shoot the generals who betrayed them. Royau repeatedly announced in his journal that the last hours of the Revolution were at hand. In Vendée a Marquis de la Rouarie was raising taxes and forming magazines of arms and ammunition in the name of the king. Nobles, who intended to desert to the enemy, were enrolling themselves under false names among the volunteers, that they might get into Switzerland and the Low Countries.

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But most mischievous of all was the preaching of the refractory priests, who represented the patriots as brigands, and the King as a martyr, and excited the young men to enrol themselves among the Catholic Apostolic and Roman Citizens, distributing among them "Hearts of Jesus" embroidered by noble ladies, and white ribbons ornamented with mottoes, to be worn in their hats.

The rage of these people knew no bounds, especially since Palm Sunday, in April. Before the Revolution all the peasants, men and women, used to come into town on Palm Sunday carrying boughs of the fir-trees, to have them blessed. There was a procession in the streets, and all the inhabitants—Catholics, Protestants, and Jews alike—were obliged to decorate their houses with tapestry, or carpets, flowers, and branches. The Jews and Lutherans were hardly allowed to close their shutters during the chanting of the litanies around the resting places of the Host.\*

\* *Réposoirs.*

But as several of the patriots, with Chauvel at their head, had complained of this ceremony, the municipal body had decreed that, in accordance with the new Constitution, which guaranteed to every man the free exercise of his religion, no person should for the future be compelled to decorate his house in any way ; that the National Guard should not be required to assist at the ceremonies of any form of worship whatsoever, and that the citizens should no longer be obliged to shut their shops during the passage of processions.

On Palm Sunday, as you may suppose, the National Guard were under arms, for hundreds of Valentines, Brother Benedicts, and other poor benighted beings of their kind, had collected together in order to get up a revolt against the law. But the commandant, having ordered the National Guard to load in their presence on the Place d'Armes, and the Constitutional priest having had the good sense to limit the procession to the church, these people went off furiously angry, but without venturing upon any demonstration.

Unfortunately, matters had gone very differently in the South and West. We learned from the newspapers that even in Paris peaceable citizens had been shamefully ill-treated because they had not taken off their hats in presence of these processions. They had actually been dragged in the mud, and, since then, the fanatics had been committing all sorts of excesses, especially in the Haut-Rhin.

We were constantly hearing that one or other of the Constitutional priests had had his house burned down, his fruit-trees torn up, or that he had been personally assaulted.

In our neighbourhood the evil race did not venture on much open molestation; they were afraid of the National Gendarmes and the Citizen Guard. But, as the disturbances and troubles increased, they became more daring.

One morning towards the end of May, when, as I have told you, we were forging pikes, we saw, at some distance down the street, the curé Christophe coming towards

us. In front of him were two men who looked like beggars ; their blouses were torn, their heads were bare, their hair was hanging about their faces, and their hands were tied behind their backs. They were also tied to one another by a rope passed round one arm of each, and the curé, with his great cudgel in his hand, and three of his parishioners, carrying their pitchforks over their shoulders, were bringing them into the town.

All the mountaineers who were gathered round the forge stared at the advancing party, and Maître Jean cried out as they advanced :

“Hollo ! Christophe ! What’s the matter ? . You look as if you had been taking prisoners.”

“Yes,” cried the curé, “these two rascals with three others of the same sort attacked me yesterday evening between Spartzbrod and Lutzelbourg, as I was returning from my brother Jerome’s house. They rushed on me from both sides of the road at once, with hatchets and knives, shouting, ‘Death to the renegade !’ But I gave them a warm recep-

tion with my stick. The other three escaped, but these two remained on the field of battle. I picked them up myself, and brought them to the Court-house, where my parishioners kept guard on them all night. We shall see what these people have against me; what have I done to them? If it had been the first time I would have been satisfied with the correction I administered to them, but this is the third time I have been attacked. The first batch of rascals had only cudgels, but these had hatchets and knives. Look, Jean, how they have wounded me."

Then M. Christophe opened his soutane and showed us his chest bandaged up with linen, which was saturated with blood.

"I have three wounds," he said, "one on the shoulder and two in the ribs."

When we saw this our indignation was such, that if the curé had not pushed the two wretches into a corner near the pump, we should certainly have split their heads with our hammers.

But he spread out his arms before them and said :



"Stop! stop! If I had wanted to kill them I could have done it without your assistance. But the law must have its part in this matter. We must find out where this comes from."

And then he made a sign to his parishioners to lead away the two scoundrels, whom the crowd overwhelmed with abuse, and followed them himself, saying as he left us :

"I will come back this way this evening, and see you again."

We talked of nothing but this incident all day. Maitre Jean could not think of anything else. He said several times :

"It is a very pleasant thing to be strong! Any other man than Christophe would certainly have been killed; but his brother Jerome, from Hengst, and he, are the two strongest men in the country. These tall red men, with little yellow spots on their skin, are all very strong. They are of the old race of mountain men."

Then he went on, laughing :

"What a surprise for the others, who thought to surprise him! What faces they

must have made, when they felt the shower of blows !”

He laughed so heartily that he set us all laughing, and presently he said, wiping his eyes—

“ Yes, they must have been astonished ; they little expected to be put to flight in that fashion !”

But afterwards, we became very serious again, and we began to think that it would be a good plan to make use of the villains who had wounded M. Christophe, for the experiment which was to be made at Phalsbourg with the new machine which all the newspapers were full of, and which was to replace the gallows. It had been tried at Paris a fortnight before, and they called this terrible invention an advance in humanity. No doubt it was an advance, but such inventions are always of ill omen, and the Capuchins, who predicted that evil days were at hand, were not in the wrong. They were destined to discover, before very long, that there was more truth in their prophecies than they had thought.

The curé Christophe came to the inn that evening, as he had promised Maitre Jean, on his way to Lutzelbourg, and told us, while he was drinking a glass of wine, that the two men were in the town prison, that the magistrate, M. Fix, after having subjected them to a long examination, was going to send them to Nancy, where they would be tried without delay.

## CHAPTER XVI.

**T**HUS did this kind of religious war gain strength and bitterness in our district, in consequence of the preaching of the refractory priests, and it must have been much worse in Vendée. A great many complaints from thence must have reached the National Assembly, for, two days after the curé Christophe had passed through Baraques, the following decree was posted up everywhere, on the church doors, at the court-house, and school-houses :

“The National Assembly, having received the report of the Committee of Twelve, considering that the disturbance excited in the kingdom by the unsworn ecclesiastics, requires that it should occupy itself without

delay with measures for its repression, decrees urgency.

“The National Assembly—considering that the efforts made by the unsworn ecclesiastics to overthrow the Constitution, render it impossible to believe that these ecclesiastics have any desire to unite themselves with the existing social system ; and considering that the public safety would be compromised by continuing to regard as members of society men who are endeavouring to dissolve that society ; considering that the penal laws are without force against men, who, acting upon consciences in order to mislead them, can almost always conceal their criminal practices from those who could have them repressed and punished—after having decreed urgency, decrees as follows :

“*Art. 1.* — The deportation of unsworn ecclesiastics shall take place as a measure of public safety and general policy, in the cases and according to the forms ensuing.”

Then came a number of articles, setting forth the cases in which the unsworn priests

should be deported, and the gist of them all was this :

“ When twenty active citizens of the same district shall unite in a demand for the deportation of an unsworn ecclesiastic, the directory of the department shall be bound to pronounce the sentence of deportation, if the opinion of the directory be conformable to the petition.”

This was a terrible decree, but we must have defended ourselves or perished ! When people have been warned ; when they have been begged and entreated to be just and reasonable ; when peace has been offered to them a hundred times, and they have refused it, and attacked afresh with renewed fury ; when they stir up civil war, and call in the foreigner to their aid, then, if the other party be not cowards or dupes, there remains only one way to rid itself of these enemies. It is to prove to them that they are the weaker, it is to treat them no longer like men of peace, but like soldiers in revolt against the country. If the nation had been conquered, what would have been the fate of

the patriots? You shall soon learn that, from the proclamation of Brunswick, the friend of the nobles and of the refractory priests.

This decree was, then, absolutely necessary. Well, Louis XVI. placed his *veto* upon it.

We also heard that the *émigrés* were returning to Paris by thousands, that they were holding secret meetings there, and that great disasters were apprehended.

The National Assembly, in order to keep order, decreed that a camp of 20,000 men should be formed in the environs of the capital. But Louis XVI. placed his *veto* on this decree also. At the same time, he sent Mallet Dupan to the Prussians, *to tell them to make haste*, and to instruct them to announce, when they should invade us, that they had no quarrel with the nation, but only with the factious members of it, and that they came there with the sole purpose of establishing the legitimate government among us against the anarchists.

There, then, you have the honest man, the good king, in league with the enemies of his

people. Let him be pitied : he wanted to put the yoke upon our necks again, and if he had succeeded, just contemplate the result. You and I should have been toiling for the nobles, the abbeys, and the convents ; we should have been bearing all the weight of taxation ; our children could not have obtained any rank in the army, or fulfilled any functions, except those of a capuchin, a lackey, or a groom ; we should have been the most miserable of wretches ; but the courtiers, the idlers, and the monks would have prospered, and sung the praises of His Majesty. The poor man did *not* succeed ; the patriots conquered the kings of Europe, that they might establish and maintain justice among us. What a misfortune ! How much he is to be pitied ! And the queen, that good queen, Marie Antoinette, who talked every day about the Prussians, and her nephew, Francis, King of Hungary, and Emperor of Germany, who were to march to her rescue, over the bodies of two hundred thousand Frenchmen !

The *Girondins*, who were at last awakened



to the fact that they were tricked by the Court, resolved to force the King to explain himself, and the Minister Roland wrote him a letter, in which he asked him at least to have sufficient candour to declare himself openly, for or against the nation. If he were for it, he ought to sanction the two decrees ; if he were against it, he ought to maintain his *veto* ; and then, in the latter case, the people would know that Louis XVI. took part with the enemies of France.

This was honest. M. Roland said :

“ Your Majesty enjoyed great prerogatives, which you believed to belong to royalty. Brought up with the idea that they were to be preserved to you, your Majesty could not behold their removal with satisfaction, and desire to have them restored was as natural as regret for their annihilation. These sentiments have been taken into account by the enemies of the Revolution ; they have reckoned upon being secretly favoured by your Majesty, until circumstances should admit of their being openly protected. These dispositions have not escaped the notice of the nation

itself, and have naturally given rise to distrust. Your Majesty has therefore been constantly presented with the alternative of yielding to private feelings, or of making sacrifices exacted by necessity, and consequently of emboldening the rebels by disquieting the country, or appeasing the country by uniting yourself with it. Everything has its limits, and we have reached those of uncertainty.

“The declaration of rights has become a political gospel, and the French Constitution a religion for which the people are ready to die. Every sentiment has of late assumed the intensity of passion. The popular ferment is extreme, and it will break out in a terrible form, unless it be calmed by a well-founded confidence in the intentions of your Majesty; but this confidence will not establish itself on protestations, it will no longer accept any basis but that of facts. It is too late to go back, there is no further means of temporising, the revolution is accomplished in the minds of the people; it will be carried on at the price of blood, and cemented by it, if

wisdom does not prevent such misfortunes as it is yet possible to avert. A little more delay, and the sorrowing people will believe that in their King they behold the friend and accomplice of conspirators."

The King's sole response was the dismissal of the Girondist ministers, but the National Assembly decreed that the ministers carried away with them the regrets of the country, and that Roland's "letter" should be sent to the eighty-three departments.

Then the King appointed Dumouriez Minister of War. This general was a clever man ; when he saw that notwithstanding his advice, Louis XVI. would not sanction the two decrees, he preferred to resign and take a small military command, the result of which was that the King, unable to find a sensible man who would risk the danger of his two *vetos*, was much discouraged. The queen rallied his confidence by telling him :

"The Prussians will soon come. Have a little more patience. You must not let yourself be cast down ; the priests are

supporting us ; everything is going well in Vendée," &c., &c.

These things were all related afterwards by one of Marie Antoinette's women, and I believe them. It was just the same sort of thing which had happened in our poor cottage when my father desponded, and my mother said to him :

"Make your mind easy. The drawing for the militia is near, and we will sell Nicholas, Claude, or Michel, for surely out of three one must win. Then we shall have some rest ; we will pay off the usurer, and with what remains we will buy a cow, or two goats."

It is always the same story ; only, in place of selling Nicholas, Claude, or me, the queen would perhaps have given up Alsace. All France suspected this, and the idea weighed heavily on our hearts, for the poorest of the Baraquins loved his country more than these people, I am sure of that. True patriotism dwells in the people ; they love the earth which they dig and plant ; the others love the places which bring them large pensions

for doing nothing. At least in my time this was the case.

Every evening at the club, motions were made for the extermination of everything, but Chauvel steadily interposed.

“ Let us be calm ! let us be calm ! Anger is of no use, and much harm. These two *vetos* do us good, the enemy is showing himself ; it is well that we should see him face to face. Up to the present we have had doubts, but now we have no more ; they *have* desired to sow discord, disquiet, disunion between us ! This is the plan of our enemies, therefore there is all the more reason for our calm, and unity. They do not want federated patriots in the environs of Paris, therefore there is all the more reason why we should send the best among us. Let each man prepare to march, and those who remain subscribe to furnish the pay of the others. Let every one act according to his means. Attention ! Let us be firm, united, and quiet ! ”

Thus he spoke ! And when we read the speeches of the Jacobins, of Bazire, Chabot,

Robespierre, and Danton, we saw that these men were not afraid, that they would not retreat, but the contrary. They all regarded the dismissal of the Girondist ministers as a public misfortune, because they, at least, had not had an understanding with the foreigner, and if they desired war, it was that the Revolution might advance with more rapid strides, and not that we might be delivered over to the enemy.

Of all the clubs in the country, I think ours was the best, which we owed to the good sense of Chauvel, and the firmness with which he kept order. A report of our proceedings was always forwarded to the Jacobins, and occasional mention was made of them in their sittings.

The next event was that Lafayette, who had always passed for a good patriot, whom Maître Jean liked so much, and whom the *Girondins* had supported against the *Montagnards*, unmasked his batteries, and we discovered that they were turned upon us, that he was siding with the Court and the King, and making fools of the people. All

he had done up to the present time had been in a great measure inspired by vanity, now he was taking up his old nature again : he was a Marquis!—and, more than that, a dangerous Marquis, for he had an army, and he might try to lead it against the National Assembly.

This was the first time such a danger had presented itself to our imagination ; since then, the device has occurred to other generals ! Happily for us, Lafayette had not won any great victories ; he said, indeed, after a trifling combat before Maubeuge, in which the Austrians were beaten :

“ My army will follow me ! ”

But he was not sure, and he contented himself with writing an insolent letter to the Assembly, declaring that the Jacobins were the cause of all the disturbance ; that the *Girondins* were mere men of intrigue, and almost ordering the National Assembly to dissolve all the clubs, and to withdraw its decrees concerning the refractory priests, and the camp on the north side of Paris.

This was the result of trusting in a Mar-

quis, who was Washington's friend! A soldier without victories, who thought to impose his commands upon the representatives of the country! From this time forth the Marquis de Lafayette,—now the friend of Washington, anon the defender of the Court,—was known. The King would not have anything to do with him, any more than we would. He was too much of a Republican for the King: he was too much of a Marquis for us.

There are men who will try to carry water on both shoulders, and who think themselves cleverer than all the rest of the world. After Lafayette's departure from Paris, the National Guard united with the people: the citizens and the workmen held together, as in '89—Pétion had had the good sense to reconcile them,—and when the insolence of this fine Marquis was made plain, they agreed to celebrate the anniversary of the Tennis Court, which fell on the 20th June. Chauvel spoke to us about it a week beforehand, in his back shop.

"This is the greatest national fête," said



he ; " the oath of the Tennis Court is, in its way, a parallel to the taking of the Bastille. These ought to be the two great fêtes kept by us, as the Jews keep the passage of the Red Sea, and the arrival at Mount Sinai."

He took a pinch of snuff slowly, and winked his eye ; and on the evening of the 20th June, even before we were made acquainted with Lafayette's letter, which did not reach us until the 24th, Chauvel said :

" We cannot celebrate the oath of the Tennis Court publicly at Phalsbourg, because it is a fortified town, and we should require the permission of the minister, which I do not wish to ask ; but never mind, I advise you all the same, to take a good glass of wine after dinner, to-morrow, in honour of the day. We shall not be the only ones in France to do so !"

Then we understood that something was in preparation for the morrow, that he knew it, but that his habitual prudence made him refrain from telling us what it was.

All the world knows now, that on the 20th June, 1792, the people of Paris rose

early, and that, led by Santerre, the brewer, Legendre, the butcher, Rossignol, the goldsmith, and some other good patriots, an innumerable crowd of men, women, and children, with cannon and pikes, with tri-coloured banners, and breeches hung at the end of long sticks, repaired to the National Assembly, shouting "Down with the *veto*!" "Long live the Girondist ministers!" and singing the "Ca ira!"

The National Assembly opened its doors to them, and from twenty-five to thirty thousand persons defiled through the hall, occupying three hours in the process, after which they went to visit the King, the Queen, and their ministers, at the Tuileries.

The National Guard, no longer commanded by Lafayette, instead of firing on them, fraternised with them, and they rushed into the palace together. Then these poor people, who had never seen anything but poverty, beheld this château, full of objects of art of every kind; of paintings, instruments of music, cabinets full of glass and porcelain; and they were utterly amazed at its splendour.

They also saw the King, in the embrasure of a window, surrounded by his servants. Legendre, the butcher, told him he must sanction the decrees, that the people were tired of being taken for fools, that they saw clearly, and would not suffer themselves to be deceived.

He spoke out, like a simple-minded, honest man. The King promised him to observe the Constitution. Then he stood up on a table, put a red cap on his head, and drank a glass of wine to the health of the Nation.

## CHAPTER XVII.

THE tumult was great, but Pétion, the Mayor of Paris, having arrived, he told the crowd of patriots who were amusing themselves by looking at the château, that, if they remained longer, the enemies of the public weal might misrepresent their intentions ; that they had acted with the dignity of free men, and that the King would see what he should have to decide upon when he should be left in quiet. They understood that the Mayor was right, and they defiled through the palace until evening, saluting the Queen and the Princesses, who were seated in one of the great saloons, with the little Dauphin.

This is what many people have represented as a crime against the King. For my part,

the more I think of it the more natural and simple it appears to me. No doubt one does not like to see a crowd in one's house, but a king ought to be like a father to his people. Louis XVI. had said a hundred times over :

“ I am the father of my subjects !”

Well, if that were true, if he thought it, he ought not to have been astonished, for what can be more natural than to go and see one's father, and ask him for what one wants ? But, to tell the truth, I think he said this just as he said other things, and that this visit from his children seemed terrible to him, because they were too familiar. And as there was no lack of Valentines in those days, they made an endless lamentation about it.

On the other hand, the patriots had hoped that Louis XVI., seeing this mass of people, would reflect and sanction the decrees. This was Chauvel's idea. But the King persisted in his *veto*, so that we perceived that we had failed, and that our enemies were going to turn this proceeding to their own advantage.

We might have been sure of it. All the party of the *Feuillants* and the so-called

constitutionalists, Barnave, Mounier, Lally-Tollendal, Dupont, the Brothers Lameth, who were always talking to the people of respect for the constitution, and advising the Court to destroy it,—these men, and half the National Guard, and seventy-six directories of departments lifted up their hands to heaven, exclaiming that all was lost, and that there was no more respect for the King, that Santerre, Rossignol, Legendre, all the leaders of the manifestation of the 20th of June, must be prosecuted, and also Pétion, the Mayor of Paris, because he had not caused the people to be fired upon, like Bailly at the Champ de Mars. Finally, Lafayette himself, instead of remaining at his post and observing the eighty thousand Austrians and Prussians who were preparing at Coblenz to invade us, quitted his command and came to Paris, to demand the punishment of the insurgents of the 20th June, in the name of the army.

The Assembly received him with great honours; but nevertheless Guadet, the *Girondin*, said :

“ When I heard that M. de Lafayette was

in Paris, I immediately thought: 'We have no longer any external enemies; the Austrians are conquered.' This illusion has not lasted long; our enemies are as they were, our situation is in nowise altered, and, nevertheless, M. de Lafayette is in Paris! What powerful motive has brought him hither? Our internal troubles? He is then afraid lest the National Assembly should not have sufficient strength to repress them? He constitutes himself the organ of his army, and of honest men. Where are these honest men? How has this army been able to deliberate? I believe that M. de Lafayette takes the opinion of his staff for that of the entire army, and I tell him that if he has left his post without leave from the Minister, he has violated the constitution."

That was clear!

Lafayette was the first specimen of those generals who, in later times, forsook their armies to come and take possession of power, on the pretence of saving the country. He ought to have been arrested and tried by court-martial; if he had had six years of

dragging the cannon ball, like a common soldier, the others would not have been in such a hurry to come to Paris without orders.

At last, after he had denounced the Jacobins to the National Assembly, he went off to their Majesties, and volunteered to conduct them to Compiègne, from whence the King might command a revision of the constitution, and re-establish the monarchy in its prerogatives, and the nobility in their civil privileges. Lafayette undertook to carry out the wishes of the king, and, if Paris should resist, to treat it as a rebellious city. We found all this out later, through letters from Coblenz. But the King and Queen received him badly.

The Queen wished to be rescued by the Prussians, and not by M. Lafayette, who had dragged her up from Versailles to Paris, in the midst of a ragged crowd, shouting, "Here come the baker, his wife, and the little baker's boy!" She could not forget all this, nor reconcile herself to the idea of any kind of constitution, and still less to seeing M. Lafayette in the character of Saviour of the monarchy. She much preferred the absolute



Government of the Prussians, and of her nephew, Francis, king of Bohemia and Hungary, and Emperor of Germany.

Lafayette, though he saw then that the day of the white horse had gone by, endeavoured, nevertheless, to assemble the National Guard, in order to exterminate the Jacobin Club; but Pétion forbade the drums to be beaten; no one came, and the crest-fallen Marquis returned quietly to his army, near Sedan.

The patriots were convinced of his treason, and the Assembly was besieged by petitions from all quarters, that the traitors, and especially Lafayette, might be punished.

At the beginning of July, 1792, during the hottest season of the year, thousands of the federated patriots, without troubling themselves about the *veto*, set out to form the proposed camp of twenty thousand men.

They marched in little bands of five or six, wearing their blouses carmagnole fashion, their red caps, and carrying a change of shoes and linen in little bundles on the ends of their sticks, and shouting :

“To Paris ! to Paris !”

The most sensible among them, the old men, when one stopped them and gave a glass of wine or brandy, would say :

“We are going to defend liberty, to overthrow oppression, and to punish traitors.”

They were white with dust. My heart yearned to follow them when I saw them turn round at the bend of the road, and wave their hats to us, shouting :

“Adieu ! you shall hear of us soon.”

If I could only have gone with them ! What misery it was to be forced to remain. But my father and mother, Mathurin and Stephen could not do without me.

The King's minister, Terrier, wrote to the directories of all the departments, urging them to put a stop to these assemblies, and to disperse them by every possible means. He directed them to remind the districts and the municipalities that the magistrates ought, on their own responsibility, to give orders to the police officers, the national gendarmerie, all the public forces, to hinder these people from

quitting their homes, on pretext of repairing to the capital.

But his letter produced no effect ; on the contrary, all the clubs opposed it, and Chauvel declared it treasonable. He said that the Austrians and Prussians had been permitted to assemble ; that the road into our country had been, so to speak, swept for them, and that now the *veto*, threats of martial law, and other infamous means were being resorted to, in order to hinder the citizens from doing their duty.

We also knew that the King's servants were going about everywhere, in the uniform of the National Guard, vilifying the federates, whom they called *sans culottes*, as if it were a crime to be poor. As if the fact of being poor were not most frequently a proof of honesty and self-respect, unknown to these beggarly minds, for it is not difficult to make of oneself a great man's valet, and there is more money to be made by doing so, than by toiling at one's trade from morning until night.

Every one thought that it was time to

bring the evil race to reason, and the National Assembly decreed as follows :

“The citizens of the National Guard, who had been induced by love of the constitution to come to Paris in order to join the army of reserve at Soissons, or in order to proceed to the frontiers, were to have their names inscribed on the lists at the municipality ; they were to be present at the *fêtes* on the 14th July, in honour of the federation ; they were to receive the ordinary military billets for three days, after which the municipality would give them marching orders, and a daily allowance until they should have reached their destination, when their battalions should be organised, and paid, upon a war footing.”

This decree did a great deal of good. It was despatched by express to the eighty-three departments, and then the king and queen must have understood that the *veto* was not all powerful.

Luckner had retreated before the Austrians in the Low Countries, by order of the Government ; ninety-five thousand Prussians and Austrians were at Coblenz, with twenty

thousand *émigrés* ready to invade us. Bouillé had declared his intention of guiding the foreigner to the soil of France, and had been summoned to their councils by Frederick William, Francis II., and Brunswick.

His fine plan was to attack Longwy, Sedan, and Verdun, which were hardly to be defended, and then to march on Paris, by way of Rethel and Reims, across the fair plains of Champagne, where the invaders would find food for their troops in the barns and storehouses of our peasants.

The refractory priests were detaching Vendée and Bretagne from our Revolution, with more and more success, and Count du Saillant, lieutenant-general to the princes, had got up an insurrection among the peasants in Lower Languedoc.

All this was serious for us, and had promise in it for our enemies, and yet, in spite of it all, in spite of the treachery of the nobles, the court, and the bishops, by which they hoped to re-establish the King's pleasure as the rule in our affairs, the winning cards were not in their hands.

If they had had a particle of common sense these people ought to have seen that "the army of cobblers and lawyers," as they called us, were not in the least afraid of the famous grenadiers of Frederick, of the Uhlans of the King of Hungary and Bohemia, or of the "illustrious descendants of the proud race of the conquerors."

In the first place, it is a very different thing to fight for oneself, and to have one's bones broken for a prince who will throw one aside like an old crutch too rickety for use. This was a reflection which ought to have occurred to them; and I think it did occur to Louis XVI., for, some time afterwards, a number of most despairing letters were found in the iron safe, in which he related the trouble and uneasiness which the assembly of the army of cobblers and lawyers had occasioned him, and his strong desire to see it divided against itself.

I shall never forget the march of the federated patriots, and the great cry which rang through France, when, in the beginning of July, the famous speech of Verginaud, the

*Girondin*, was circulated throughout the country, and we all know that the National Assembly shared our sentiments respecting the treason of Louis XVI. Chauvel read the speech aloud at the club, and the mere tone of his voice made every face in the crowd pale. Vergniaud said :

“ It is in the name of the King, to avenge the outraged dignity of the King, to defend the King, to come to the assistance of the King, that the French princes have enlisted the Courts of Europe ; that the treaty of Pelnitz has been concluded ; that Austria and Prussia have taken arms ; all the ills which they are striving to accumulate upon our heads, every evil which we have to dread, has for its sole cause and pretext the name of the King.”

Then, speaking of the Constitution, which charged the King only with the defence of the nation, he continued :

“ O King, you who have feigned to love the laws only that you might preserve the power which enabled you to brave them ; to love the Constitution only that it might not

thrust you from the throne on which you remain for its destruction ; to love the nation only that by inspiring it with misplaced trust in you, the success of your perfidy might be secured ; do you think you can delude us with hypocritical protestations ? Did you defend us when you opposed the foreign soldiers by troops whose inferiority rendered their defeat certain ? Did you defend us when you set aside every project tending to strengthen the interior of the kingdom, or to make preparations for resistance until the time when we should have already become the prey of tyrants ? Did you defend us when you permitted a general to violate the Constitution unproved, and when you placed restrictions upon the courage of those who served that Constitution ? No ; you have not kept your oath. The Constitution may, perhaps, be overthrown, but you will not reap the fruit of your perjury ! You have not opposed yourself by a formal act to the victories which have been won over liberty, but you shall not reap the fruit of your unworthy triumph. You count for nothing any more



in this Constitution, which you have so basely violated. You are nothing any more for the people whom, like a coward, you have betrayed !”

A cry of wrath arose in the club, and amid the crowd beyond, to whom Chauvel's voice penetrated. This was nothing more than the truth, nothing more than we had all thought beforehand. With such a king, whose interests were opposed to those of the whole nation, we must perish. Therefore, we all said :

“Down with him ; turn him off the throne ; let there be an end of this, and, henceforth, let the people take the defence upon themselves !”

The last and strongest proof of the base treason of Louis XVI. was furnished on the following day, when his own ministers went to the Assembly and declared that the Treasury, the army, and the navy were in so bad a condition that they must beg to resign in a body.

When they had said this, these valorous persons escaped from the Hall with all pos-

sible speed, without waiting for any reply, like those bankrupts who, having no excuse to make for themselves, escape to England or elsewhere, and leave honest people to poverty and ruin.

The meaning of their declaration was just this :

“You have placed confidence in us. Instead of putting France into a condition to resist invasion, we have done nothing at all. Now, our friends, the Prussians and the Austrians, are ready—they are advancing. Let us see how you will get out of this position.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

WE *did* get out of it, nevertheless.

The next day, 11th July, 1792, the National Assembly declared "The country in danger," and all France rose.

These words, "the country in danger," meant—

"Your fields, your meadows, your horses, your father and mother, your villages—all the rights and all the liberties which you have won from the nobles and the bishops—are in danger. The *émigrés* are coming, with masses of Prussians and Austrians, to rob and pillage you, to massacre you, to burn your houses and your barns, to force you to pay tithe, gabelle, and all the rest of it, from father to son. Defend yourselves, and keep together, or else make up your mind to set to

work again to toil like oxen for the nobles and the monks."

Yes, this was the meaning of "the country in danger!" And therefore it was that we marched like one man, and struck such terrible blows, for the ideas of the Revolution were the ideas of us all; we were defending our property, our rights, and our liberty.

This decree was proclaimed in every commune in France. Cannon were fired every hour, the tocsin was rung, and when the people knew that their fields were in danger of invasion, you may be sure they left their sickles in the furrow, and ran to seize upon muskets; for their fields would bear harvests again the next year, and for ten, for a hundred years to come. The *harvest* might be burned, the horses of the Prussians might be fed with it; but the chief object was to guard the *fields* which should bear corn, barley, oats, and potatoes for the children and the grand-children.

In our district, the enthusiasm arose in the first instance among the sons of the

purchasers of the national property, who knew that if the *émigrés* came back, their fathers would be hanged. When Elof Collin read out the decree, standing in the middle of the market-place, and screaming like an old hawk upon his rock, "Citizens, the country is in danger ! Citizens, come to the aid of the country !" these young men climbed up on the platform, five or six at a time, and inscribed their names.

As for me, I did not possess anything then, but I hoped to have property of my own later. I did not want to be always working for other people ; and besides, I shared Chauvel's opinions upon liberty ; I would have allowed myself to be killed for the cause of liberty ! And even now, old as I am, my blood boils at the bare idea that any rascal should attempt to injure me in my person or property.

I did not wait long, you may be sure. I saw at once what must be done, and the moment the reading of the proclamation came to an end, I ascended the platform, and enrolled myself as a volunteer. The first name

on the list is Xaintrailles, the second is Latour-Froissère, and the third is Michel Bastien of Baraques of Bois-des-Chênes.

If I were to say that my resolution did not cost me anything, I should not tell the truth. I knew that my old father must be in poverty during my three years of service, and that Maitre Jean would be in great difficulty about his forge—but the first necessity was our defence; we could not send the nobles in our place, we must do our own fighting our own selves, or remain in bondage throughout all time.

As I came down, with my ticket stuck in my hatband, my father, who was standing at the bottom of the steps, stretched out his arms to me, and we embraced, amid cries of "Long live the Nation!" His chin was trembling, tears were running down his cheeks, he clasped me to him, sobbing, and said—

"Well done, my boy! Now I am happy! The wound which Nicholas gave me is healed, and I am no longer in pain."

He said this, because he was an honest

man, and nothing could cause him so much pain as the treason of his sons against his own blood and his own country ; and now he was consoled.

Maitre Jean also embraced me, for he reflected that I was going to defend his farm at Pickelholtz, and that if *the others* came back, it would be through no fault of mine. He was right ; before they touched a hair of his head, they would have had to cut me into a thousand pieces. This is true, I mean no more and no less. The only enthusiasm which lasts comes from a true sense of justice and right.

I need not describe the scene which ensued—the shouts, the hand-shakings, the embracings, the oaths to “conquer or die.” Everyone knows that these things are always alike, and that since then the people have been deceived, through bad newspapers, by beings full of pride and folly, into manifesting similar enthusiasm for wars which had no real interest for France, and which have done our country great harm. This time, however, it was serious ; the nation was roused to en-

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enthusiasm on its own account; it was going to fight in the defence of its own property, and its own liberty, which was better than going to the slaughter for the honour and glory of a king or an emperor.

I never can remember without emotion those old men and women, wrinkled and bent, hanging upon the necks of their sons who had just enrolled themselves—poor old people from Dagsberg, wood-cutters and charcoal-burners, who had nothing to guard, who lived in their wretched huts, and had nothing to gain or lose by this war, but, nevertheless, were alive to the love of country, justice, and liberty.

And then, the patriotic gifts for the parents of the volunteers, for the wounded, for the equipment of the troops; offerings of all sorts made by the very poorest, who entreated our municipal officers to receive their two poor farthings; the children who cried because they were not old enough to be drummers or trumpeters! All these things were natural—each one did what he could.

But there is something which comes back



to me more clearly still, something which rouses me up, and makes me feel again as I felt at twenty, and this is it. At noon, when Maitre Jean, Létumier, my father, and I, were at table in Chauvel's library, where the shutters were closed on account of the great heat, and whence Marguerite had to go into the shop every now and then, when the bell rang, to serve a customer, and would then come back again, without looking at me—I could not laugh like the others, or feel at all delighted that I had to go at once to the camp at Wissenbourg. I was feeling this difference between myself and the others very keenly, when Chauvel took up a bottle of old wine, and, holding it steadily between his knees, drew the cork.

“We are going to drink this,” he said, “to Michel's health! Come, my friends, fill your glasses!”

He set the bottle on the table, looked at me gravely, and continued—

“Listen, Michel! You know that I love you—that is an old story;—but your conduct of to-day proves to me that you are *a man*, and

increases my esteem for you. You have not hesitated one moment about doing your duty as a patriot, notwithstanding the serious ties which bind you to your home. That is right! Now you are going away, you are going to defend the rights of man, and if we had not other duties you should not go alone, we would be in the ranks together. But tell me frankly, Michel, is there not something here that you regret? Can you go with a light heart? Have you nothing to ask from us? not one of those patriotic gifts which are made only to men whom one loves and esteems?"

His eyes were fixed on me, and I felt that my face was red. I turned my glance upon Marguerite, who sat still, pale, and with her eyes cast down. I did not dare to speak—the silence was painful. Then Chauvel turned to my father, and said—

"Tell me your opinion, Bastien! I think our country loves one another."

"So, too," said my father, "and I

think so for

we v

think

them, what

“ Ah ! Monsieur Chauvel, that would be the happiest moment of my life.”

While they were speaking thus gaily, Marguerite and I had both risen, but without venturing to approach one another.

Chauvel said—

“ Embrace one another, my children.”

The next moment she was in my arms, her face was hidden on my shoulder—she was mine!

What happiness thus to be permitted to embrace her whom I loved, unrebuked, in the presence of our relatives and friends !

How proud I was to hold her in my arms ; what strength he must have had who should have taken her from me !

Maitre Jean laughed his loud, kindly laugh, and Chauvel, turning on the side of his chair towards us, said—

“ I betroth you to one another. You are going away now, Michel, but, in three years, when you return, she shall be your wife. You will wait for him, will you not, Marguerite ?”

“ For ever !” she replied, and I felt the clasp of her arms tighten around me.

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Then I said, with tears which I could not repress—

“I have never loved but you—I never will love any other. I am glad to go and fight for you all, for I love you all.”

I sat down, and Marguerite left the room. Chauvel filled our glasses, and said—

“This is a happy day! To the health of my son Michel!”

My father replied—

“To the health of my daughter, Marguerite!”

And we all drank :

“To the country! To liberty!”

One hundred and sixty-three national volunteers enrolled themselves that day at Phalsbourg. The whole country was enthusiastic, and desirous to defend what we had.

Not a soul remained in the fields. Outside, in the market-place and in the streets, nothing was to be heard but cries of “Long live the nation! *Ca ira, ça ira!*”

And then came the clash of the bells, and the hourly thunder of the cannon, which shook our window panes.

We continued to fraternise in Chauvel's shop, and when from time to time a patriot would come to the door, and call out the latest condition of the volunteer list, he would be brought in and made to drink a glass of wine in honour of the country.

Chauvel took countless pinches of snuff, and winked innumerable times, as he repeated—

“All is going on well! All will go on well!”

He was alluding to the great measures in preparation in Paris, but he did not tell us what they were.

## CHAPTER XIX.

**M**AITRE JEAN had taken my brother Claude as head man on his farm at Pickelholtz. Claude was a good workman, and a most amiable, sweet-tempered fellow; who did exactly everything that he was told to do; but he was utterly without any ideas of his own, and therein suited Maître Jean, who liked to command, to a nicety. And now Maître Jean told me he would take Mathurine also to the farm, which was a wise proceeding, for a better manager, more careful, and even a little close, as they who live by their labour ought to be, it would have been impossible to find in the country,

Maître Jean, who intended to return to the

superintendence of the forge until I should come back, arranged these things at once, and my father, who still earned eight or ten sous a day, and who had two goats, and no debts, was perfectly satisfied, especially as Chauvel promised to find some easy place in the town for my brother Stephen.

At five o'clock, the secretary, Freylik, came to tell us that the city volunteers were to set out the following morning at eight o'clock for the camp at Wissenbourg, and that they were to wait for the volunteers from the other villages of the district, at Graufthal, where the general rendezvous had been fixed.

This news made us rather more grave, but we were very happy notwithstanding, and drank some more patriotic toasts.

When night came, and we had to return to Baraques, Chauvel shut his shop, and Marguerite took my arm as far as the gate of France.

This was the first time we had been seen together out of doors; the people

looked at us and shouted, "Long live the Nation!"

Chauvel, Maître Jean, and my father followed us. On the bridge, in front of the guard-house, I embraced Marguerite, and she returned home with her father.

We went on our way singing and laughing, very happy, and—why should I not tell it?—a little tipsy, after all the good wine and the excitement of the day. All those whom we met were in the same condition, and we had to stop and embrace them, and shout, "Long live the Nation" together.

It was nine o'clock when we bade Maître Jean and Létumier "good night" before the door of the "Three Pigeons;" but they were going to bed and to sleep quietly, while something very different was in store for my poor father and me. I tell you this that you may understand the rest of my story; in this world good and evil walk side by side; and you will see that if the patriots were victorious in the end, it was not without difficulty,



since each had, so to speak, a Vendée in his own family.

My father and I went on down the old street, full of ruts and rubbish. We were singing, and apparently very jolly, but this was only to keep up our courage, for we were both thinking about my mother, who certainly would not be pleased to hear that I was going away as a volunteer, and still less that I was betrothed to a heretic ! But, when we came to within a hundred yards of our house, we stopped short, and no longer felt any inclination to sing, for there was my mother in her grey skirt, her large cap tied behind, her hair hanging down, and her thin, hard arms bare from the elbows. She was sitting on the step of our old hovel, her hands were clasped round her knees, and her chin rested on them ; she was looking at us as we came towards her ; her eyes were shining, and we knew that she had already heard what had happened.

I have never felt anything like that moment. I would have turned back, but my father said :

“Let us go on, Michel.”

And this time I saw that he was not afraid.

We drew near the house, and when we were within about twenty paces of her, my mother rushed upon me, with a terrible cry, the cry—God forgive me for saying it—of a savage. She seized my throat between her hands, and dug her fingers into it, so that she would have dragged me to the ground if I had not caught her by the arms to keep her from strangling me. Then she kicked my legs, and cried :

“Go and kill Nicholas ! Go and kill your brother, vile Calvinist !”

At the same time she tried to bite me. All the village heard her, the people came out of their houses. It was a scandalous scene.

My father had caught hold of her jacket, and was dragging her back with both hands to force her to let me go, and, feeling him pulling at her, she turned on him with the utmost fury, calling him a Jacobin, and but

for Hanovre, the charcoal burner, and five or six neighbours, I really believe she would have torn his eyes out.

The neighbours dragged her towards the house, struggling in their hands, and calling out to me, in a voice of withering contempt :

“Ah, you are a good son ! To forsake your father and mother that you may marry a Calvinist ! But you shall not have her, you vile renegade ! No, Nicholas will cut you to pieces ; I will have masses said, that he may kill you ! Get out of my sight ; I curse you !”

Even after they had succeeded in pushing her into the house, her cries resounded through the village.

My father and I had remained standing in the street. We were as pale as corpses. When the door was shut on her, my father said :

“She is mad ! Let us go away, Michel. If we were to go into the house she might try to murder you ! My God, my God, what an

unfortunate man I am! What have I done to merit such a fate?"

We retraced our steps to the "Three Pigeons." A lamp was still burning in the tavern.

Maître Jean was sitting in his arm-chair, telling his wife and Nicole all the events of this happy day, and when he saw us come in, I, with my neck covered with blood, and my father with his vest torn, and when he heard what had happened, he said :

"My poor Jean Pierre, is it possible? Ah, if she weren't your wife, we would have her put in prison very quickly! We owe this to that refractory priest at Hernidorff. It is time to make an end of it with these men; yes, it is high time."

He also said that for the future my mother must be left to herself, that my father must come and work in his yard, and sleep at the tavern.

But things could not be settled after that fashion; my father wished to live in his own poor house with my mother; long habit and

his good principles forbade him to separate from his wife; for, in spite of everything, it is always better to live together; they who do not fulfil this duty are looked upon with suspicion by honest folks, and their children suffer by it.

That night we slept at the tavern, and early the next morning my father went home to fetch my trunk. He put everything into it, and also brought me my gun, and my National Guard's knapsack, shot-belt, and the rest; but my mother refused to see me, in spite of all that he could say to her.

I had to go away without seeing my mother, bearing with me her malediction, and her wish for my death. I had not deserved this, and it gave me keen pain.

Maitre Jean told me afterwards that my mother did not like me because I resembled her mother-in-law, Ursula Bastien, whom, in her lifetime, she had always detested, and he added that mothers and daughters-in-law always detest one another. This may be, but

it is very unfortunate to be hated by those whom one loves, and for whom one has always done everything in one's power. Yes, I repeat, it is a great misfortune.

## CHAPTER XX.

NOW, my friends, we must take leave of our district, of the old Baraques of Bois-des-Chênes, and of all the good people there.

The next day, at ten o'clock, we had already arrived in the valley of the Graufthal, on the other side of the mountain, near the rocks. It was there that all the volunteers of the district were to assemble, before they went to Bitche, to Wissenbourg, and even farther on ; the first arrivals had orders to wait for the others.

We had started very early on account of the heat, which made itself felt soon after dawn. Marguerite, Chauvel, Maître Jean, my father, and all the village, men, women, and children, had accompanied us to our first

halting-place. We camped at the side of the sandy road, in the shade of the beech trees, stacked our arms, and rested, looking out upon the great valley, with its river bordered with willows, and its forest interspersed with rocks, which towered up into the air. How often, within the last fifty years, I have stopped on this road, to look around me and think of the old, old times ! I could see it all again, and I have said to myself :

“ Here we embraced for the last time. It was here that that poor Jacques, or that unlucky Jean Claude, turned, with his gun on his shoulder, to press his father’s hand once more, and say cheerily : ‘ Good bye, until next year ! ’ ”

The men of Saint Jean des Choux came up by one road, and those of Mittelbronn by another ; we heard their drums long before, when all of a sudden they came out of the plantation, carrying their hats on the points of their bayonets. Then arose fresh cries of “ Long live the Nation ! ” and filled the valley.

Ah, how those old times are now !



and yet, the trees, the rocks, the shrubs, are living, and the ivy is climbing still; but where are they who shouted, and embraced each other, and promised to return? When I think of all my comrades who lie along the banks of the Moselle, the Meuse, the Rhine, and in the thickets of Argonne, I am fain to acknowledge that the Lord has watched over me.

Ours was only one of the assemblies of that month of July, 1792; the same things were being done everywhere; all the villages in France had their volunteers ready to set out.

In those days no provisions were to be had in the Graufthal. Old Becker's inn was not in existence; and the women, knowing we should have to wait, had brought food and drink with them. Marguerite sat beside me on the edge of the road, and uncovered a little basket of bread, wine, and meat, which we shared.

Chauvel, my father, Maitre Jean, and three or four municipal officers were stationed on the lower road, under the shade of the oak

trees ; they looked at us from a distance, for they understood that we had many things to say, and that we preferred to be alone. Marguerite charged me to write to her whenever I could ; she looked lovingly at me ; she did not cry as so many others did, she was quite firm, because she understood that at such a time, it was not right to discourage those who were going away.

“While you are away,” she said, in her tender voice, “I will always think of you,—always—always. And you need not be uneasy about your father,—he is my father also,—I love him,—he shall not want for anything.”

I stood before her, listening to her with admiration, and I took courage. The hope of returning never forsook me, even in the midst of the greatest dangers ; when many others allowed themselves to be beaten down by the rain, the snow, the cold, by hunger, by suffering, I clung to life. I *would* see Marguerite again, and my love sustained me.

When the *curé*, Christophe, arrived, the

shouts of "Long live the Nation !" awoke the echoes of Faldberg and the Bande Noire. One would have thought that the old mountains had come to life, and were shouting with us, from one summit to another, and lifting up their myriad arms of oak and fir.

The *curé* brought us the Lutzelbourg Volunteers ; and he also came to bless our colours. I saw him a long way off, under the rocks at Richelberg, as he came down the winding road, holding my little brother Stephen by the hand. I had not had time to go and see the poor child, and he was coming to me, limping along as well as he could.

Then I went down to the bridge over the Zinsell. It was about eleven o'clock, and the heat was so great in the valley and the air so heavy, that the river was flashing all over with little fish rising at the flies which were falling into the river by thousands, and the trout were flitting about like lightning under the osiers.

On the bridge I met M. Christophe, who stretched out his huge hand to me, and said :

"I am pleased with you, Michel. I know your happiness, and I know you deserve it."

Stephen sprang into my arms, and I carried him as far as the forest house, where the meetings of the General Council of the Commune were held.

Stephen ran to Marguerite, and my father, Chauvel, Maître Jean, and the village mayor came to shake hands with the curé.

All the volunteers of the environs were now assembled. They numbered five or six hundred, and we were only waiting for those who were to come from the mountain. We were just getting into order when we heard their drum at a distance, and cried :

"Here they are !"

They were the last, and had to come five leagues more than we. They were all woodcutters, charcoal-burners, sawyers,—strong, active fellows, who had already chosen Claude Hullin, the sabot maker, who, in 1814, defended himself so gallantly against the allies, for their chief.

Marc Divès, the pedlar, with his large hat,

his linen trousers, his bare feet, his heavy cudgel, and his blouse fastened round his waist with a handkerchief, was with them, and half a league off we could hear him shouting, calling to the stragglers, imitating the cuckoo and the wood-pecker.

Then we saw him twirling his cudgel round his head, and, in order to make a short cut, crossing the river with the water up to his middle.

The others followed him. It was the best refreshment they could take.

## CHAPTER XXI.

**A**FTER the arrival of Hullin and his companions, Jean Rat and Leger's two sons, volunteer drummers, set to work, and we all knew the great moment was near.

Everyone who has gone from Phalsbourg to Petite Pierre knows the great block of stone on the left side of the road, in the middle of the meadow. This mass must have rolled down from the height—but when? No one can tell that; perhaps before the creation of man. Well, it was on this rock, surrounded by all the volunteers, and by crowds of other people, who had come from the town and the villages, that Christophe, after having reminded us of our duties as Christian soldiers, blessed our colours. Each village had

its own; they were collected together, in the form of a fasces, and he blessed them, with his arms stretched out over them, in Latin, after the manner of the Church.

Immediately afterwards Chauvel, as municipal officer, and president of the club, ascended the same rock. He ordered the colours of the battalion—a large tricoloured flag, surmounted by a peasant's cap in red wool—to be brought forward, and, extending his hands, he blessed it after the Constitutional fashion, saying—

“ Old cap of the French peasant, so long bent towards the earth—old cap, steeped in the sweat of our unhappy forefathers—cap of the serf, on which nobles and bishops have trodden for a thousand years—lift thyself up, and march in the midst of our battles! May the children and the grandchildren of those who have worn thee in servitude, bear thee in triumph through the bayonets of our enemies! May they hold thee aloft—may they never let thee sink! Mayest thou become the terror of those who would again enslave the people! may the sight of thee confound

them, and may future ages learn that from the depths of debasement, through the firmness, the courage, the virtues of thy champions, thou hast reached the height of glory !”

Then Chauvel, who was deadly pale, turned towards his quivering hearers, and cried—

“Volunteers ! Children of the people ! You swear to defend this flag to the death ! This flag, which represents your country and your liberty—this flag, which recalls the sufferings of your ancestors—you swear it ? Answer me !”

We all replied, and the answer rolled like thunder—

“We swear !”

“It is well,” said he. “In the name of the country, I accept your oath—the country relies on you, and blesses you all !”

He spoke forcibly, but simply, and his voice reached the ears of every one in the crowd.

After that Chauvel came down from the rock, and almost immediately a number of



people, who were not near relatives of the volunteers, turned back towards their villages, for a dark cloud was settling over Petite Pierre, and, together with the great heat, made us apprehend heavy rain.

Chauvel ordered the drummers to beat the recall, and when we had all formed in a circle round him, Maître Jean, and the mayors, he told us that the election of our officers and sub-officers, decreed by the Legislative Assembly, would be made by ourselves on our arrival at the camp ; but that in the meantime it would be well to appoint a leader to maintain order on the march, to superintend the distribution of lodgings, the hours of departure, and the rest. He advised us to choose one, and it was done immediately.

The mountain volunteers had chosen Hullin, the sabot-maker, and they shouted—

“ Hullin ! ”

Everyone repeated the same name, and Hullin was our leader until we reached the camp at Lixheim. He had not much to do beyond hurrying us, and on our arrival at

any place, going to the mayor to ask him for our food and lodging.

But now it is time that I should tell you of our separation.

Towards noon, as the sky was growing darker, and we heard that sudden shuddering in the woods—when all the leaves tremble, though there is not a breath of wind—which tells of approaching storm, Hullin, who was among the mayors, went down into the road, and ordered the recall to be beaten.

Then we all knew this was the moment of our departure. The mayors, Chauvel, Maitre Jean, the curé Christophe, in short, everyone went down into the lower road.

I looked at Marguerite, as though to hold her in my heart during the three years in which I should see her no more. She looked at me, and her eyes were troubled. I held her hand, and I felt that she wished to keep me back.

“I must go,” I said—“kiss me, Marguerite.”

I kissed her. She was quite pale and silent.

I took my bag up, and buckled it ; Chauvel, my father, Stephen, and Maitre Jean had come. We embraced each other.

I had given my eighty livres of bounty-money to my father, to pay for Stephen's board and lodging, and, while I was embracing Maitre Jean, I felt that he slipped something into my pocket ; it was two louis, which did me good service later.

It was time to go, for my courage was failing. I took my gun, and said—

“ Adieu !—adieu, all !—adieu !”

But at that moment Marguerite cried out, in a tone which pierced my heart—

“ Michel !”

I came back, and she was crying.

“ Marguerite,” I said, “ take courage. It is the country which demands this of us.”

I felt as if I had not a drop of blood in my veins ; all around us the people were weeping. Women are terrible !

Then Marguerite composed herself, and clasping me close to her, she said—

“ Defend yourself well !”

I ran quickly down the road, without a

word to the others, or even a look in their direction.

Nearly all the volunteers had collected below, the others came up rapidly, and we set out.

Large drops of rain were already falling; we smelt the pleasant odour of the rain on hot dust, and as we were turning the angle of the road which goes up to Petite Pierre, the rain began with a flash of lightning, but the worst of the storm had passed over the mountain towards Saverne, in Alsace, and the great rain did us good.

The same day, at three o'clock, we passed Petite Pierre, but without stopping. We did not halt until we had marched four leagues further, and were close to some large glass-works in the midst of the woods.

I had been lost in reverie all the way, I had not even looked at my companions, my mind was so full of other things. But when we were in a kind of large open market-place, where some people had lighted a fire for us, while others were bringing us bread and beer, Marc Divès, who was sitting beside me, put his hand on my shoulder and said :

"It's hard, Michel, to quit one's home."

I looked at him, I was glad to recognise him, but I did not reply. No one was in a humour for talking, and each of us, after he had eaten his crust of bread and drunk his jug of beer, lay down with his knapsack under his head, between the pillars of the huge barn-like place.

It is a privilege of youth to forget its sorrows for a while in sleep. Old people are not so fortunate.

Early next morning Hullin called to us :

"Come, comrades, let us be off."

We rose, buckled our knapsacks, and looked out. A heavy dew was falling, the great drops glittered on the tiles. There were some old soldiers among us, and they tied their handkerchiefs round the locks of their muskets before they slung them over their shoulders.

Just as we were ready to start, a long file of mounted volunteers from the Lower Rhine debouched on our right. In those days they were called National Dragoons ; they were the sons of peasants, brewers, postmasters,

butchers, farmers, people who were tolerably well off, who supplied their own horses. With the exception of three or four old soldiers who wore their former uniform, these Alsatians were in their usual attire. One had his three-cornered hat, and his large boots with shining nails; another his red waistcoat, his short jacket, his cap with a fox's tail, and his high hair gaiters with bone buttons. The only external mark by which they might be recognised as dragoons was the large sabre in a leathern scabbard, which dangled from each man's belt, and struck against his spurs. No finer men or better horsemen could have been seen; they all looked equally gay and resolute.

When they saw us, drawn up, ready to start, their commandant ordered them to draw their swords, and they all began together to sing a song which we did not then know, but which we were to hear often enough afterwards upon the fields of battle:

“ Allons, enfants de la patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé!”

What a song for such a moment! It drove us nearly mad! The cries of "Long live the Nation!" were louder than ever; and as the Alsatians defiled before the glassworks, the master came out with his wife and daughters, to beg of them to wait awhile.

We had gathered round them, and were holding them by the bridle, by the hand, and saying to them:

"We must fraternise, brave Alsatians; we must fraternise; get down. Long live the Nation!"

Their chief, a tall fellow, six feet high, said they had orders to report themselves that evening at Saarbruck, and they went on their way.

It would be impossible to describe our enthusiasm after having heard this song; it was like the cry of the country in danger.

When we left that place, each of us had acquired new courage.

I said, in my own mind:

“Now all will go well, we have the song which Chauvel asked for, to replace the *Carmagnole*; something strong and great, like the people.”

I can still recal the commotion in the hamlets and villages in the mountains, the tocsin ringing on all sides, and at every bye-road long lines of volunteers, their little bundles tied up in handkerchiefs on the end of their sticks, passed by, shouting to us joyously :

“Victory or Death !”

The whole country was aroused and on foot. When it is necessary to defend the real interests of the people, I do believe men would come out of the dust.

On reaching the little town of Bitche, we found the streets, squares, and taverns, so crammed with people, that we had to camp outside, in the midst of the fields and gardens, with several other village contingents.

Hullin went in alone, to make his declaration to the municipality, and ask for provisions.



Then I looked at this old town, half French and half German, which strongly resembles Saverne, with its fortress frowning above it, approached by passages and posterns which reach to a height of six hundred feet. From the summit the cannons command the plain for three leagues. I saw upon the ramparts the uniform of the poor soldiers of Chateau Vieux. They had sworn to die, to the last man, rather than yield up the citadel, and these brave men kept their word, while their murderer, the Marquis de Bouillé, was showing the Prussians the way into France.

At Bitche, the first distribution was made, and from thence we set out for the camp at Rixheim, between Wissembourg and Landau.

We had to march all day in the heat of the sun, for we had passed the woods, and there was no more shade to be had, except occasionally as we skirted the orchards. Several other detachments, of horse and foot, were following the same direction. Lines of wag-gons laden with wine and ammunition were

not wanting, there was, indeed, little else to be seen ; but oh, the dust ! how we longed for a pelting rain such as we had enjoyed the day before.

We arrived at Rixheim at nine o'clock in the evening, and found the cantonment in high spirits. A cavalry engagement had taken place that morning ; our national dragoons had routed the Eben hussars and the dragoons of Lubgovitz, led by *émigrés*, who had sallied out to cut off a convoy of provisions on the way to Landau. The affair had been very hot. Custine commanded the charge. But in the village of Rixheim every one was telling with emotion of a poor little drummer boy, belonging to the battalion of volunteer *chasseurs* from Strasbourg, who had been the first to discover the Eben hussars in the distance, and who had instantly beaten "to arms." An Eben hussar had struck off his right hand, as he dashed past him, and the poor child had not ceased for an instant to beat his drum with the left hand. They trampled him under their horses' feet !

This was the beginning of the war !

Now I must rest awhile, and take breath. I must also go and see two old comrades who are still alive, in the mountains yonder, and who will refresh my memory. Therefore, my friends, we will stay where we are for awhile. This first war of the Republic is well worth thinking about before one undertakes to relate it. Besides this, so many other great events took place at the same time, that I must detail them all in order, collect my old papers, and write nothing that shall not be acknowledged to be just and true by honest people.

If God gives me health, I hope to do all these things very soon.

THE END.



